GRAPE EXPECTATIONS RAISE A GLASS IN CALIFORNIA'S WINE COUNTRY {page 26}

STOP US IF YOU'VE SEEN THIS ONE... DEJA VU AT THE MOVIES {page 16}

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RCMP eye end to Craigslist adult ads

Company already shut down erotic services listings in the U.S. after complaint by various attorneys general ◐ Forum criticized for not offering enough protection against illegal ads promoting prostitution ◐ Other sites offer similar postings: Experts

The RCMP say they're working with Craigslist to try to stop erotic ads that many fear are a cover for prostitution.

Sgt. Marie-Claude Arsenault said yesterday Craigslist has measures in place in the U.S. — such as censoring erotic ads — that Mounties would like to see in Canada.

Queen's University law professor Art Cockfield said he's unsure if the company could be legally forced by Canadian authorities to shut down.

"If the law-enforcement officials believe that they were engaged in illegal activities, actually acting as an online pimp, then that is a violation of our federal criminal laws and they could be prosecuted."

A Craigslist spokeswoman did not immediately respond to emails.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Festival. Solo samurai

▶ David Gaines performs his 7 (x1) Samurai during a media preview at Performance Works on Granville Island yesterday.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Fringe returns

The 26th annual Vancouver Fringe Festival begins tomorrow at various venues across the city. More than 80 acts and more than 600 performances will be held over 11 days. Story, page 4.

Canada

Campaign targets trafficking

◐ Ottawa teams up with Mounties, Crime Stoppers to build public awareness of human exploitation ◐ Information kit also to be used to aid efforts {page 8}

Vegas police defend release

Deputy chief stands by decision to get Hilton out of jail ASAP {page 25}

Plan to torch Qur'an rankles U.S. officials

General warns that burning could incite violence, endanger American lives {page 10}

Missed out on a connection?

Romantics getting second chance online {page 6}

Venus advances to final four

Williams-Clijsters showdown looms at U.S. Open {page 33}

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2 arrested in murder

Two men have been arrested for the months-old violent murder of a 67-year-old Vancouver man whose body was found stuffed inside the trunk of his own van, police said yesterday.

Patrick Alexander LeBlanc was murdered in Vancouver this spring and his body was brought to New Westminster, according to RCMP Insp. Kevin Hackett.

▶ LeBlanc

Glen Anhert, 28, was arrested in Manitoba and Russell Brian Benson, 38, was arrested in Ontario.

The men, who were arrested a week ago today, are facing charges of second-degree murder.

LeBlanc had no connection with organized crime nor drugs, Hackett said, but was connected to his alleged killers through business associations.

VANESSA YEE

Metro correction notice

An article about Vancouver Community College (VCC) published in yesterday's Metro Vancouver incorrectly placed the school's award-winning Building B at another college.

Metro regrets the error.

Building B, at VCC's Broadway campus, received last month a bronze medal from the Interior Designers Institute of British Columbia for its interior layout.

VCC hosts nearly 25,000 students and is the largest public college in the province accredited by the Ministry of Advanced Education.

For more information on Vancouver Community College, visit www.vcc.ca.

METRO VANCOUVER

Vancouver cops roll out their tank

- Vehicle built by Quebec company
- ARV costs $5,000 a year to run

Police in Vancouver yesterday announced a hefty addition to their fleet — one with a price tag more in line with a top-of-the-line sports car (think Lamborghini Murcielago) than a Crown Victoria.

Deputy Chief Adam Palmer unveiled the creatively named armoured rescue vehicle (ARV) atop Little Mountain and said the hulking $350,000 vehicle would only be used in the highest risk situations, like hostage takings and the arrest of armed and dangerous people.

Palmer outlined past scenarios in which the vehicle, a matte-black armoured car on steroids, could have been used. His list included a 2008 office Christmas-party shooting and hostage taking, and 2005 incident involving a deranged man waving a sawed-off shotgun on the Lions Gate Bridge.

The vehicle would not be used during protests or riots, Palmer said.

The hulking vehicle, which when fully loaded weighs-in at almost 16 tonnes, is bullet proof and seats 10 emergency response members. It has a roof turret and an elevating platform that emerges from the floor.

JEFF HODSON

Paying the bill

▶ The Vancouver Police Foundation raised $258,000 for the purchase through private donations at a charity roast of former Chief Const. Jamie Graham, said foundation chair Peter Armstrong. The city paid the remainder.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

▶ A member of the emergency response team steps out of the VPD's new armoured rescue vehicle in Queen Elizabeth Park yesterday.

1 news

News on the move

1 Download the free ScanLife application with your smartphone at 2dscan.com

2 Use the ScanLife application on your smartphone to scan 2D barcodes in Metro

3 The codes will direct your mobile browser to relevant content at m.metronews.ca

On the web at metronews.ca

Election or no election, there's a battle for Canadian hearts and minds in Ottawa. More at metronews.ca/spindoctor

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www.VancouverCityDanceTheatre.com
VANCOUVER CITY DANCE THEATRE

The Vancouver International Fringe Festival starts tomorrow and runs until Sept. 19 It's B.C.'s largest theatre event, attracting more than 30,000 people

TEXT **JENNIFER O'CALLAGHAN** PHOTOS **JEFF HODSON**

The frenzy of the Fringe Festival

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

▶ Fringe executive director David Jordan, right, rocks out with Otto, left, and Astrid Rot during yesterday's media preview of Die Roten Punkte.

JENNIFER O'CALLAGHAN
VANCOUVER@METRONEWS.CA

The Vancouver International Fringe Festival kicks off tomorrow with its first of 617 performances of "bring-your-own-venue theatre," according to executive director David Jordan.

"We have many stage venues for traditional folks, but there'll be a show in people's backyard and two shows on fire escapes," said Jordan.

Tickets

For tickets and schedule information, visit vancouverfringe.com.

3 FRINGE MUST-SEE SHOWS

7(X1) SAMURAI

▶ David Gaines is a one-man band as a samurai clown who clearly has as much fun as the audience.

ZDENKA NOW!

▶ Check out flamboyant TV host Precious Chong on opening night when her dad Tommy Chong pays her a visit.

FREUD VS. HIS EGO

▶ Bruce Horak and Ryan Gladstone star as the duelling Freuds.

* Subject to change or withdrawal without notice. Some conditions and restrictions apply. Visit a branch for details.

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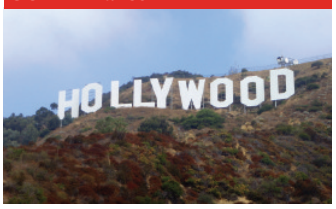

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Las Vegas	from $198 + taxes & fees $109
San Diego	from $199 + taxes & fees $114
San Francisco	from $238 + taxes & fees $111
Honolulu	from $298 + taxes & fees $112
Denver	from $299 + taxes & fees $119
Chicago	from $389 + taxes & fees $121
Maui	from $398 + taxes & fees $112
New York	from $438 + taxes & fees $131

Airfares

Puerto Vallarta
from **$75**
+ taxes & fees $290

Victoria	one-way from $49 + taxes & fees $33
Calgary	one-way from $119 + taxes & fees $59
Prince George	one-way from $119 + taxes & fees $48
London	from $149 + taxes & fees $474
Toronto	one-way from $185 + taxes & fees $73
Halifax	one-way from $279 + taxes & fees $93
Cancun	from $295 + taxes & fees $290
Paris	from $498 + taxes & fees $427
Mexico City	from $378 + taxes & fees $314
Bangkok	from $789 + taxes & fees $272
Tokyo	from $789 + taxes & fees $405

Vacations

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Air + 7 Nights
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INCLUDES transfers and central accom in Havana.

Argentina Air + 6 Nights — from $1349 + taxes & fees $267
INCLUDES accom in the heart of downtown Buenos Aires with buffet breakfast.

Puerto Rico
Air + 7 Nights 4-Star — from $1379 + taxes & fees $220
INCLUDES oceanfront accom close to Old San Juan, historic landmarks and entertainment.

Thailand Island Hopping
Air + 8 Nights — from $1469 + taxes & fees $238
INCLUDES 3 nights accom in Phuket, 2 nights on Koh Yao and 3 nights on Koh Phi Phi. **BONUS** daily breakfast included.

Chile Air + 7 Nights 4-Star — from $1939 + taxes & fees $252
INCLUDES accom in the heart of Santiago with breakfast.

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USA Vacations

New Orleans
Halloween Special, Air + 3 Nights
from **$599**
+ taxes & fees $122

INCLUDES accom near the French Quarter over Halloween weekend. **ADD** Ghosts & Spirits walking tour from $24.

Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights — from $249 + taxes & fees $109
INCLUDES accom on the Las Vegas Strip. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $17 per night.

Anaheim Family Special
Air + 4 Nights — from $318◊ + taxes & fees $110
INCLUDES accom near *Disneyland* Resort. Price is per person based on quad occupancy. **BOOK** this package based on quad occupancy from $361 per person. **ADD** 3-day *Disneyland* Resort *Park Hopper* Bonus Ticket from $203.

San Diego Air + 3 Nights — from $339 + taxes & fees $115
INCLUDES accom close to attractions with parking, airport shuttle and breakfast.

Palm Springs
Air + 3 Nights 4-Star — from $418 + taxes & fees $115
INCLUDES accom with breakfast and 25% discount at select golf courses.

Orlando Air + 4 Nights — from $429 + taxes & fees $127
INCLUDES accom close to *Walt Disney World* Resort with shuttle to local theme parks.

Hollywood Air + 3 Nights — from $449 + taxes & fees $125
INCLUDES accom near the Walk of Fame, Universal Studios and Beverly Hills. **ADD** hop-on hop-off double decker tour from $35.

San Francisco Thanksgiving Weekend
Air + 3 Nights — from $458 + taxes & fees $112
INCLUDES central accom close to Union Square and breakfast.

Honolulu Air + 7 Nights — from $549 + taxes & fees $111
INCLUDES Waikiki accom. **ADD** surf school group lesson from $92.

Maui Air + 7 Nights — from $829 + taxes & fees $117
INCLUDES condo-style Kihei accom near the beach.

Europe Vacations

London
Air + 6 Nights
from **$529**
+ taxes & fees $474

INCLUDES central accom with breakfast.

All-inclusive Vacations

Mayan Riviera
7 Nights 4.5-Star
from **$605**
+ taxes & fees $290

Puerto Vallarta
7 Nights 4-Star — from $348 + taxes & fees $273

Varadero 7 Nights 4-Star — from $565 + taxes & fees $216

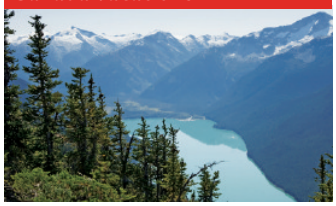
Mazatlan 7 Nights 5-Star — from $647 + taxes & fees $273
BONUS free upgrade to oceanview room if available.

Cancun 7 Nights 4.5-Star — from $685 + taxes & fees $290

Los Cabos 7 Nights 5-Star — from $765 + taxes & fees $290

Punta Cana 7 Nights 4-Star — from $897 + taxes & fees $322

Canada Vacations



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Fairmont Group Special
2 Nights + Golf
from **$139**
taxes & fees included

INCLUDES accom at the Chateau Whistler and 2 rounds of golf per room with unlimited use of the practice facility. Price is per person based on quad occupancy. **BOOK** this package based on double occupancy from $214 per person.

Harrisson Hot Springs
2 Nights — from $149 taxes & fees included
INCLUDES accom on Harrisson Lake.

Sun Peaks 3 Nights 4-Star — from $199 taxes & fees included
INCLUDES accom in the heart of Sun Peaks Village.

Banff 3 Nights + Car — from $299 taxes & fees included
INCLUDES central accom and 4-day car rental from Vancouver with unlimited mileage.

Toronto Air + 4 Nights — from $638 + taxes & fees $157
INCLUDES central 4-star accom. **ADD** Niagara Falls day tour from $136.

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Making a missed connection

Social media lets people be more vocal than in person: Experts ◗ But responders are warned to tread carefully

VANESSA YEE
VANCOUVER@METRONEWS.CA

There aren't a lot of "do-overs" in life, but there are second chances on Craigslist.

Self-proclaimed "hopeless romantic" Thomas Urqhart said he felt an immediate attraction to another man at the PNE, but his timing "wasn't right." He went out on a limb and placed an ad on Craigslist's Missed Connections section.

It worked — they connected.

"It's an easy way to approach someone," said social media expert Rebecca Bollwitt, a.k.a. Miss604.

Social media gives "courage from behind the computer screen," said Bollwitt, who spent a large portion of her own long-distance relationship online. "But nothing replaces seeing someone in person."

Simon Fraser University communications professor Peter Chow-White said that social media allows "enough social distance to overcome the interpersonal issues" one might have.

"A huge part of social media is getting out (and) meeting face-to-face."
REBECCA BOLLWITT, MISS604

"It's meant to connect people in ways that overcome geography, space, time or even sliding doors."

Social media sites give people a sort of protection from rejection. Several Missed Connections posters said they were just tossing out a line to see if there was any chance they'd find their connection.

While these postings may seem romantic, Bollwitt said people should be cautious when responding.

"It's more anonymous. Just be careful not to reveal too much about yourself."

What do you think of meeting people online? Tell us at vancouverletters@metronews.ca.

SFU. Joining the Club

▶ Max Shyshkin, 19, a second-year student at Simon Fraser University, signs up for Club Metro at Convocation Hall yesterday.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Students putt for prizes

Visitors to the Club Metro Lounge practised their mini-golf skills for free phone cards and signed up for a chance to win a MINI Cooper or a Sony Xperia Mini cellphone. For more pictures of the SFU event, visit metronews.ca/vancouver. Club Metro will be at UBC and BCIT today. Pick up tomorrow's paper to see if you made our photos.

Transit crunch was 'average': TransLink

Yesterday's predicted back-to-school transit crush was actually "fairly average," and at worst people had to wait two trains before getting on SkyTrain, according to TransLink.

Top hot spots were the Commercial-Broadway SkyTrain Station and Production Way, according to TransLink's Drew Snider.

Some SFU-bound students at the latter stop had to wait three buses — about 10 minutes — before getting onboard.

"The thing to remember is it could well be busier (today). Many people ... take the day after Labour Day off and then come back to work on Wednesday. Students didn't have classes (yesterday), so buses to UBC and SFU may be more crowded (today), as well." KRISTEN THOMPSON

Reader tweets

Metro asked its Twitter followers what changes they'd like to see on Vancouver transit.

[@SpiderRider3] Trash receptacles onboard buses and the SkyTrain.

[@hladyv] xtend Skytrain hours. Those of use who work strange hours need better service. Even if it ran only one or twice an hour.

@frugalis] Free Wi-Fi.

[@brittriddell] Air fresheners.

Reach Metro on Twitter @vancouvermetro

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Fighting exploitation

Government hopes to build awareness of human trafficking Most victims women, children: Toews

The federal government is teaming up with the Mounties and Crime Stoppers to raise awareness about human trafficking.

Public Safety Minister Vic Toews says Crime Stoppers will join his department and the RCMP to tell people about human trafficking and how to report suspicious activity.

Toews, speaking at a news conference in Winnipeg, called human trafficking a "disturbing" crime.

"Victims are forced, often through violence and threats, to provide their services or labour because of their fear of their safety or that of someone else," he said.

The Mounties have put together a human trafficking information kit for police, governments, non-governmental organizations and the public.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Taking action

The "Blue Blindfold" campaign will help fight human trafficking.

Coercion Vic Toews said victims of human trafficking are often coerced into working for the criminals who bring them into the country.

CANADIAN FORCES

▶ Human smugglers brought hundreds of Tamil refugees to Canada recently aboard the MV Sun Sea.

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News in brief

Registry gains popular ground

OPINION. A new poll suggests public opinion is shifting in favour of keeping the controversial long-gun registry. The August poll by Harris-Decima indicates that 48 per cent of respondents thought it would be a bad idea to get rid of the registry.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Who loves Facebook?

RESEARCH. A new study suggests that Facebook is a magnet for narcissists and people with low self-esteem. The York University research shows that individuals with higher levels of narcissism and lower self-esteem spend more time on the social-networking website.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stoning debate intensifies

IRAN. The international crossfire over Iran's stoning sentence for a woman convicted of adultery intensified yesterday with a top European Union official calling it "barbaric" and an Iranian spokesman saying it's about punishing a criminal and not a human rights issue.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DND expects conflict as supplies run short

Official: Climate change may lead to violence ◆ Water a likely trigger

A navy planner says the Canadian Forces must be ready to be called to the front lines in the battle against the effects of climate change.

A recently published article by Lt.-Cmdr. Ray Snook of the Defence Department's directorate of maritime strategy says the military may have to step in if conflicts flare over dwindling supplies of food and water.

"There will be a clear need for peace support operations too, and being called upon to intervene overseas and to help prevent or to resolve conflicts may occur more frequently," he wrote in the summer issue of the Canadian Naval Review.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Defence Minister Peter MacKay, right, poses with members of the military after announcing a $30-million infrastructure project at CFB Comox on Vancouver Island yesterday.

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Teens had chatted before meeting

KATIE TURNER
CALGARY@METRONEWS.CA

Details revealed by police yesterday in a sexual assault case showed that a teenage boy and young girl had previously chatted online and arranged their meeting.

Around 5 p.m. Monday, police were called to Clarence Sansom School in Pineridge where they learned a 16-year-old boy had allegedly assaulted a 12-year-old girl.

"They agreed to meet at the park," said Staff Sgt. Leah Barber. "This wasn't a random attack by a group of kids."

Barber said there were eight other teens ranging from ages 12 to 16 who witnessed the event.

"While the group was sitting in the bleachers, the girl and boy became involved in a sexual act," she said, adding police believe parties involved had been drinking alcohol.

Police have yet to interview the victim, however Barber said because the girl is 12 and the alleged assailant is more than two years her senior, the act cannot be considered consensual.

Charges are pending against the 16-year-old; however, Barber said there is a possibility that no charges will be laid.

News in brief

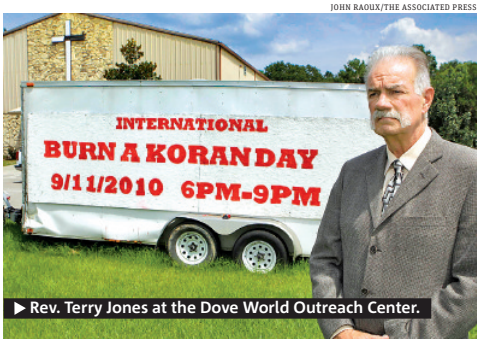
Volcano covers area in ash

ERUPTION. An Indonesian volcano shot a towering cloud of black ash high into the air yesterday, dusting villages 25 kilometres away in its most powerful eruption since awakening last week from four centuries of dormancy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reverend: Qur'an burning still a go

- Jones says constitution gives him right to burn book
- State Dept. urges Americans to condemn Jones' plan

JOHN RAOUX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



▶ Rev. Terry Jones at the Dove World Outreach Center.

The U.S. government turned up the pressure yesterday on the head of a small Florida church who plans to burn copies of the Qur'an on Sept. 11, warning him that doing so could endanger U.S. troops and Americans everywhere.

But the Rev. Terry Jones insisted he would go ahead with his plans, despite criticism from the top U.S. general in Afghanistan, the White House and the State Department, as well as a host of religious leaders.

Gen. David Petraeus warned yesterday in an email to The Associated Press that "images of the burning of a Qur'an would undoubtedly be used by extremists in Afghanistan — and around the world — to inflame public opinion and incite violence." It was a rare example of a military commander taking a position on a domestic political matter.

Jones responded that he is also concerned but refused to cancel the protest set for Saturday at his Dove World Outreach Center, a church that espouses an anti-Islam philosophy.

The Vatican newspaper yesterday published an article in which Catholic bishops criticized Jones' plan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Terry Jones file

Jones gained some local notoriety last year when he posted signs in front of his small church declaring "Islam is of the Devil."

- **Bad timing** Jones' Qur'an-burning scheme, which he announced in July, attracted wider attention just as an emotional debate was taking shape over the proposed Islamic centre near the Ground Zero site in New York.
- **"Evil" book** The Qur'an, according to Jones, is "evil" because it espouses something other than biblical truth and incites radical, violent behaviour among Muslims.
- **No denomination** Jones' Dove Outreach Center is independent of any denomination. The church follows the Pentecostal tradition.

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Interest rate rise expected

But some economists question wisdom of raising rates when growth has slowed

Interest rates are expected to rise for the third time in as many months today.

A consensus of economists believe Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney will overlook recent disappointing economic data and hike the trendsetting rate a quarter point to one per cent.

But many economists question how much further Carney can go in his current tightening phase considering that the U.S. is heading in the opposite direction. And some blame the sharp slowdown during the spring and summer on the anticipation of higher interest rates.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bad idea?

Some believe Carney has already moved too quickly.

- **Slow GDP** Last week, Statistics Canada reported that the country's gross domestic product rose two per cent in the second quarter, a far cry from the previous quarter's 5.8 per cent advance.
- **Homes and cars** The slowdown was most acute in the two areas that are most sensitive to interest rates, home and car sales, notes economist Carl Weinberg.

TV. Making news

▶ Quebecor CEO Pierre Karl Peladeau is attempting to launch a new right-wing news network.

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

U.S. takes an interest

The controversy over a proposed conservative Canadian TV network is making news south of the border. The Hollywood Reporter has carried two stories in the past week detailing Quebecor's bid to launch Sun TV News, a 24-hour right-wing all-news network.

Market moment

TSX	Dollar	Oil	Natural gas 1,000 cu ft
- 42.94 (12,101.98)	– 0.8¢ (95.42¢ US)	– 51¢ US ($74.09 US)	$3.857 (- 8.2¢)
			Gold contracts $1,257.30 (+ $8.10)

PHOTOS AS OF 5 PM YESTERDAY

Wealthy Chinese urged to give more

KIN CHEUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

▶ Chinese billionaire Wang Chuanfu

Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates and billionaire investor Warren Buffett plan to sell the art of giving to China's super rich in a visit this month that's already sparked some soul searching among the world's second-largest number of billionaires.

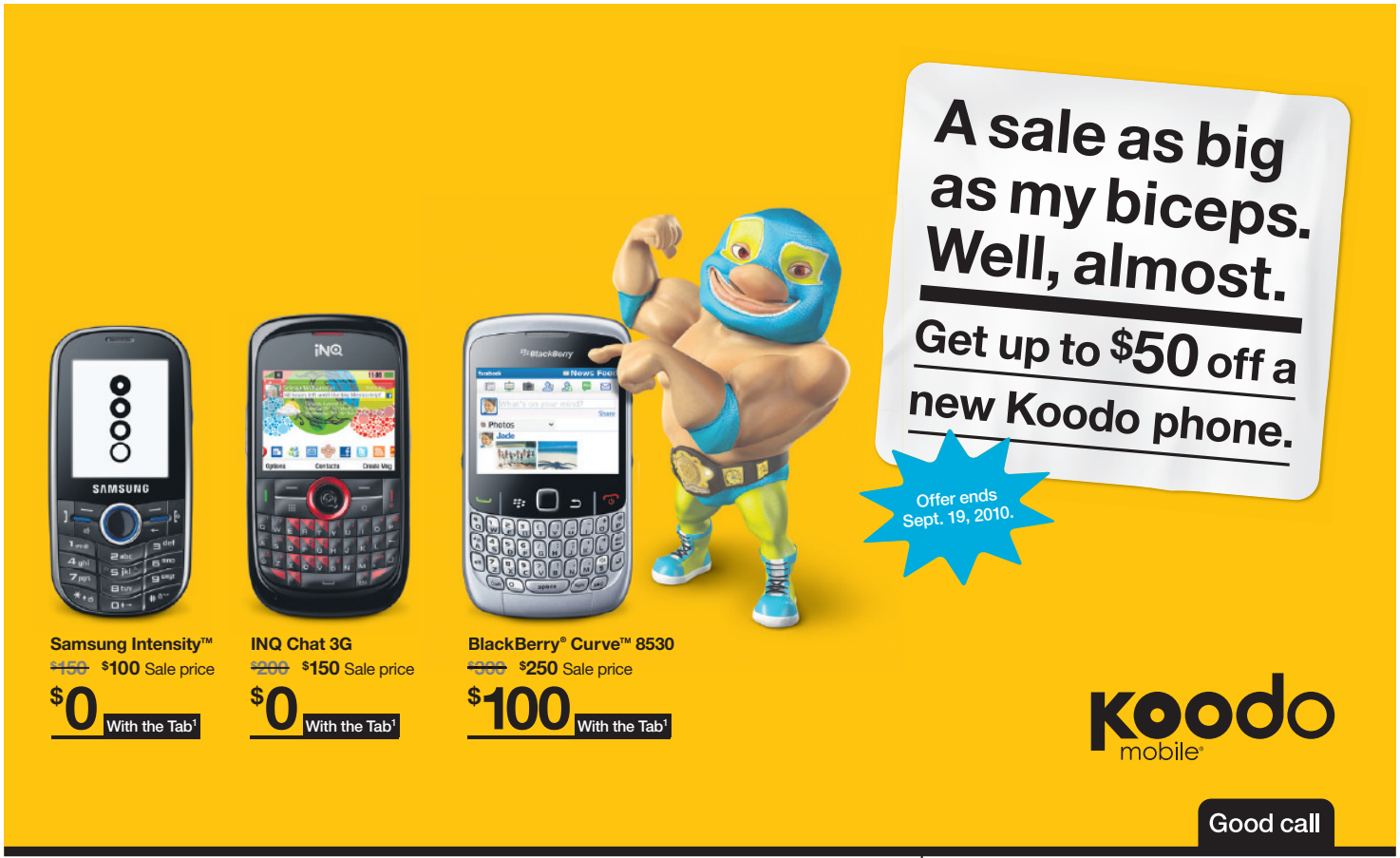
Reactions to Gates and Buffett's trip have been varied: One prominent Chinese philanthropist quickly pledged his entire fortune to charity, while the head of a private foundation said Chinese businesses should be leery of emulating American-style donations before essential standards such as workers' rights are improved. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1 in 5 firms plan to hire: Survey

8% Economists have warned that Canada's unemployment rate could remain around eight per cent for some time.

Miners in Western and Atlantic Canada could be some of Canada's most desirable job candidates in the coming quarter, according to a survey of employer intentions by a global staffing firm. The survey released yesterday by Manpower Canada found 21 per cent of more than 1,900 Canadian employers expect to increase their payrolls in the fourth quarter of 2010, but seven per cent anticipate cutbacks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Singapore cracks down on local dialect

- Country's use of English helps attract investment
- Government fears Singlish threatens economic edge

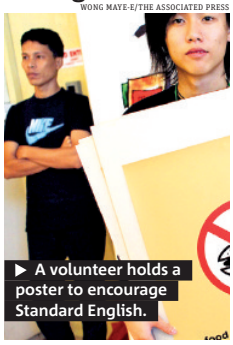
"Borrow me $5 can?" may not be the most graceful way to ask for a few dollars, but it's music to the ears of many Singaporeans.

But as Singapore cements its position as a financial services hub and top regional tourist destination, the government is redoubling efforts to persuade locals to speak standard English.

The government insists mastery of English is imperative to raise living standards as the economy shifts to services from manufacturing.

Some worry, however, that the island's unique patois known as Singlish could be lost, and with it an important cultural glue unifying the multi-ethnic, multi-religious city-state of 5.1 million people.

WONG MAYE-E/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



▶ A volunteer holds a poster to encourage Standard English.

The government yesterday revived a decade-long drive to get Singaporeans to speak grammatically correct English.

Through partnerships with restaurants and shopping centre food courts, the government plans to exhort patrons to Get it Right with posters showing examples of Singlish phrases crossed out and their equivalent meaning in English.

Singlish is a jumble of the nation's four official languages — English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil — and vocabulary from several Chinese dialects. It often consists of English words used to directly translate Chinese phrases.

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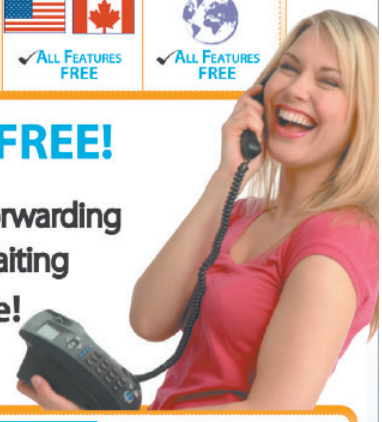

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MAKE WAY FOR A NEW BREED OF MAMIL

Just sayin'

PAUL SULLIVAN

According to biologists, I'm a mammal, a warm-blooded creature with fur.

According to some wags, I'm also a MAMIL, or middle-aged man in Lycra, one of a species seen waddling out from our dens on weekends and mounting expensive road bikes in a picturesque attempt to capture some of the reflected glory that goes with the Tour de France and other sexy, manly European road races.

I'm not sure who coined the term, but it refers to men of a certain age, who, freaking out at the loss of youth, don't buy a red Porsche Boxster, opting instead for a red Pinarello or Specialized S-Works road bike. Even though it can set them back up to $10,000, it's cheaper than the chariot, saves on CO2 and helps them stay fit. With all the money they save, they can outfit themselves in the bike gear of their favourite Tour De France hero, like Alberto Contador or old Ironsides, Lance Armstrong.

MAMILs also exhibit some interesting behaviour. For example, they shave their legs. They think it makes them more aerodynamic. Long-suffering spouses refrain from pointing out the obvious: That if their significant MAMIL would only lay off the carbs and drop 20 pounds, it would be a damn sight easier to get up the hill.

"MAMILs also exhibit some interesting behaviour. For example, they shave their legs."

MAMILs travel in packs, often with MAFILs, (middle-aged females in Lycra, natch), who are given equal status in the herd, at least until the testosterone starts to run and the boys can't help racing even though they know they won't be able to walk, never mind do chores, rendering them useless for the rest of the weekend, sowing discord in the den.

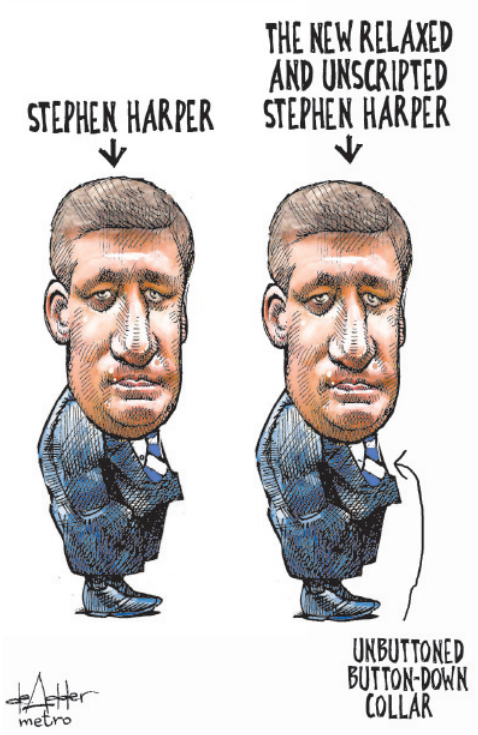
MAMILs also love hills, and grunt up mountains at the slightest provocation. Not everyone has the cash, time or guts to climb the Col du Tourmalet, a daunting feature of the Tour De France, but here in Vancouver, MAMILs think nothing of riding up Cypress Bowl and Mount Seymour on the same day, a combined climb of almost 30 kilometres, straight up.

This Saturday morning will be a great opportunity to catch 4,000 of us in the RBC GranFondo Whistler, a breathtaking 120-kilometre ride along the Sea to Sky Highway to Whistler from downtown Vancouver. The GranFondo (which means "big ride" in sexy Italian, the lingua franca of MAMILs) has a net elevation gain of 650 metres, which is perfect for grunting up, and the first of its kind in Canada.

It sold out months ago, so next year's GranFondo promises to be even bigger. And it's just the start. The GranFondo Lycra will stretch from coast to coast. Organizers are planning to launch events in major MAMIL habitats, wherever there are large concentrations of mid-life crisis.

Cartoon

MICHAEL DE ADDER



Buses aren't cafeterias

Letters & Tweets

Re: Riders, drivers share peeves (Sept. 7)

VANCOUVER. I have a pet peeve to add to those mentioned in your article. People eating on the bus and Canada Line.

I called TransLink and the person said I should ask the people not to eat on the bus. There is a small sign at the front that shows no food or drink.

TransLink should have bigger signs and more advertising.

MARILYN PIERLET

VANCOUVER. There are many to choose from, including:

- Riders with blaring music coming from their headphones;
- Riders who spread their legs super wide so neighbours are left with no room;
- Missed buses because of a driver who leaves two to three minutes early ... only to have the next driver arrive three to five minutes late. It happens on so many occasions.

FRED WOO

VANCOUVER. My personal bus rider peeve is people who block the rear exit when they are not getting off at the next stop. I can't count the times I've had to elbow past headphone-wearing douchebags to exit a bus.

PAUL CECH

Something to chew on

CONTRIBUTED

What one thing would you take on a deserted island?

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Metro Minute with disc golf

If you're tired of crazy green fees or golf country clubs, try disc golf — also known as Frisbee golf.

Disc golf is growing in popularity as a group sport because all it requires is the ability to throw a disc at a target. The game is inexpensive and is physically accessible for all ages and athletic ranges and attracts a diverse range of players.

The object of the game is to throw a Frisbee in the "pole hole" with as few "strokes" as possible, similar to traditional golf.

The Little Mountain disc golf course is at the southeast corner of Queen Elizabeth Park.

The park is also home to a pitch-and-putt course.

No green fees are required. ● **JENNIFER O'CALLAGHAN**

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▶ The disc golf area at Queen Elizabeth Park.

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2 scene

Didn't we see that one already?

Hollywood loves a good formula The fall movie season is rife with tried-and-true plot setups that might just give you a case of deja vu

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN NEW YORK

Coming up

Beginning of the end for Harry Potter

Nov. 19 will see the release of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1, the first of the franchise's two-part finale. Last year we spoke with director David Yates about the process of shooting the final three films back to back. Poor guy was trying to be stoic about it: "You can't look at the top of the mountain. It's such a long way. You just look at it like, 'I'm going to get it over there today.' The two things you mustn't think about are the response to them and [not looking] too far ahead." METRO

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LOOKS LIKE

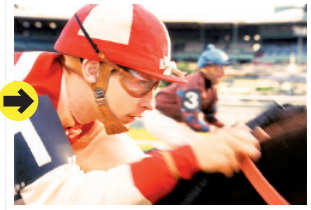
SEPT. 17
The Town — A second directorial effort from Ben Affleck finds him in front of the camera showing off his greatest strength — a Boston accent. He plays a thief trying to go straight, but who inevitably becomes torn between his loyalties and his love for a new hot thing.

This latest installment is starting to build a case for a **"Boston crime movies"** genre, which would already include Affleck's first film, **Gone Baby Gone, Mystic River** and recent classic **The Departed.** We'll pay anything to hear those Southie accents utter **"Did you kill my dawtah?"** and **"That was nawt wicked smaht."**

OCT. 1
Let Me In – Chloe Moretz stars as a troubled child in this American version of the Swedish film Let the Right One In. Critics seemed to have liked the original that doing a remake wasn't really necessary, but you know how Americans feel about subtitles.

Aside from the obvious association with the source material, the murderous child theme is not only something that makes an appearance every year (like last year's **The Orphan**), but this season alone sports at least two others, including **Case 39,** starring Renee Zellweger, and **The Last Exorcism.**

OCT. 8
Secretariat — Secretariat is a biopic about housewife Penny Chenery (Diane Lane) who takes over the management of her ailing father's stables, only to have one of its horses win the Triple Crown. Really? Another horse movie? Did anyone even watch Seabiscuit? It was a bad idea the first time, folks.



Obviously **Seabiscuit,** but also when you really think about it, there are a ton of horse movies out there: **Black Beauty, The Black Stallion, National Velvet, Flicka.** And here we were thinking these films are only made for long-haired 10 year-old girls.

OCT. 15
Red — A rogue team of ex-CIA agents now marked as the agency's top targets reunite the team to show the U.S. government what's up. Helen Mirren, John Malkovich, Bruce Willis and Morgan Freeman make up the team and — surprise! — the source material is a comic book.

It's kind of **The Bucket List** crossed with **The Expendables** or **The Losers** if Dame Helen had bigger pectorals or if Malkovich looked a little more like Terry Crews. Assembling such a top-notch list of actors for a caper like this reeks of hopes for another box-office payday like **Oceans 11.**

True life, true story

- 2010 is gearing up to be one of the best years for documentaries — ever!
- Two movie experts weigh in on what's in store for the next few months
- What films are already being labeled as Academy Awards contenders

DOROTHY ROBINSON
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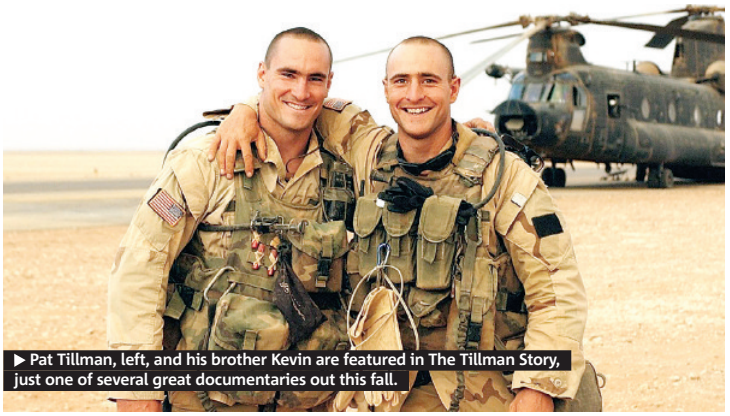

▶ Pat Tillman, left, and his brother Kevin are featured in The Tillman Story, just one of several great documentaries out this fall.

This summer, the editor-in-chief of Fandango.com, Chuck Walton, decided to watch 100 films in 100 days. And although he might be approaching movie fatigue at this point, he was able to talk with us about what documentaries will soon be big. "Documentaries have changed," he says about the genre. "It's not the same old 'I'm going to educate you about something' kind of film, but rather it's a great style of storytelling."

The Tillman Story

"I saw Restrepo over the summer and really loved it," Walton says regarding the film chronicling the year journalist Sebastian Junger and a photographer spent with an American platoon in Afghanistan. "(The Tillman Story) is a different, more personal take on the Iraq war," he says of this doc about the death of former NFL player and U.S. Army Cpl. Pat Tillman.

"Getting nominated makes a huge, huge difference in the careers of the filmmakers. If you look at this year's top docs, the vast majority are directed by previously nominated filmmakers."
SCOTT FEINBERG

Freakonomics

Walton is curious about Freakonomics not only because it's based on the best-selling book, but also because the style of the film is so appealing. "Each vignette (five in all) is by a different documentary filmmaker, including Alex Gibney and Morgan Spurlock," he says of the award-winning Taxi to the Dark Side and Super Size Me directors, respectively.

Waiting for Superman

"Anyone who is a fan of An Inconvenient Truth will be interested in this film," says Walton. Directed by Davis Guggenheim (An Inconvenient Truth, It Might Get Loud), Superman analyzes the failures of U.S. public education by following students navigating the system.

More Oscar bait

We asked Scott Feinberg, film industry analyst and film blogger (scott feinberg.com), for his predictions on which docs will be nominated this year:

- **Waiting for Superman –** Looking at the failures of the American public education system.
- **Inside Job –** A documentary about the financial crisis.
- **A Film Unfinished –** Focuses on a Nazi-produced film about the Warsaw ghetto
- **Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer –** A doc on former New York governor Eliot Spitzer's rise and fall.
- **Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work –** Explores the life and career of the famous comedienne.

Tell us what you are recording @vancouvermetro

PVRTweets

What *returning* series are you most looking forward to this Fall?

@Rainyfool Dexter!
@mikeatqazam Big Bang Theory and Community; two funniest shows on television imho.
@lrushka House!!!!
@Schu_Les Dexter!!!
@a_frilles but of course the popular musical show.. second season of Glee :)

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The skinny on being fat

New plus-sized sitcom Mike & Molly works hard to move beyond weighty issues

HANDOUT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Billy Gardell and Melissa McCarthy star in the new sitcom Mike & Molly

While the new sitcom Mike & Molly spins around two single people who hook up at an Overeaters Anonymous meeting, the stars and creative team insist the show isn't about being fat. Instead, they say, it's about people who happen to be fat.

And yet, with two overweight principals heading up a series produced in thin-obsessed Hollywood, can they avoid the discussion of weight?

Fat chance.

Throughout summer, a blast of major media outlets did stories about what one Los Angeles Times columnist dubbed the current crop of "pound-power" shows, narrative series with plus-sized leads, including Drop Dead Diva, Huge and, now, Mike & Molly, which the actors were discussing with reporters at the Television Critics Association press tour in late July.

"I'm used to being the guy that comes in, you say something funny, you move the scene along, you're out of the way"
BILLY GARDELL, WHO PLAYS MIKE

"The questions feel a little bit like Hollywood is going, 'Are there fat people out there where you come from?'" joked actor Billy Gardell, who plays Mike.

Mike & Molly is the brainchild of Mark Roberts, working again with Chuck Lorre (Two and Half Men), who serves as an executive producer.

"When Mark and I started out on this process, Mark mentioned Marty, the Ernest Borgnine film."

Lorre recalled about the story of a heavyset, lonely man seeking love. "That touched both of us, and the poignancy of people that might have given up hope that they'll ever find someone."

The casting call for the character of Molly asked for "a sweet-faced, overweight woman in her 30s." according to Roberts. "I ended up seeing just about every other woman who's been in any kind of production of 'Hairspray,' but Melissa (McCarthy) was the first piece of tape we saw.

"With women of size,"Roberts said, "A lot of times there's often an overly apologetic nature to their being, or there's a too-rambunctious, sort of Chris Farley (thing). ... But she was just a person. She was just a sweet, lovable, funny woman who wasn't uncomfortable with herself."

Previously, McCarthy, 40, and Gardell, 41, were seen in the periphery, as supporting players on such series as Samantha Who? and My Name Is Earl.

"I'm used to being the guy that comes in, you say something funny, you move the scene along, you're out of the way," Gardell said. "So, with this, I get to act. You get to really have moments. You're not only funny. ... You're driving the story."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Where to watch

The when and where you can watch the new sitcom Mike & Molly

- **Launch date** Mike & Molly debuts Sept. 20. Check your local listings.

We paid for a weekend getaway to New York with our TD Points (even the sightseeing tour).

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Sons of Anarchy finding some good from the bad

An outlaw bike club chasing their dream is a compelling watch

AMBER RAY
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METRO WORLD NEWS IN NEW YORK

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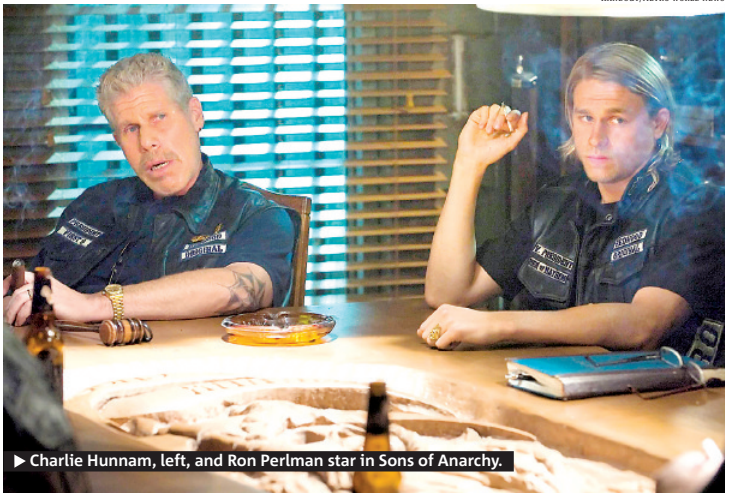

▶ Charlie Hunnam, left, and Ron Perlman star in Sons of Anarchy.

The Sons of Anarchy, aka SAMCRO, might operate above the law (see: gunrunning, murder), but please — don't call them a gang. These "motorcycle enthusiasts" are after the same American dream as everyone else, says Sons of Anarchy series creator Kurt Sutter. As Season 3 opens, their path — which finds the club's matriarch on the lam and the baby of her son, SAMCRO vice-president Jax, kidnapped — is simply a little more dangerous than most people's.

"I don't necessarily think of these characters as being bad men or bad women," says Sutter. "Although the solution and their actions are quite often different than ones we would choose, their motivations are often the same as ours, whether it's protecting their family or protecting their hometown."

Ron Perlman, who plays the club's founder and current president, has no qualms about making a hero out of a character that is typically the villain.

"(SAMCRO has) an incredibly well-articulated code of values that sort of permeates its way through the whole family — because it is a family," Perlman says of the Sons. "It's men and women and children and earners and caretakers and spenders. Family drama is what it is, and we're just fighting for the things that are going to make us have the lives we want to live."

Even if that existence leads to a showdown with the Irish Republican Army this season?

"No one is going to tell us what that life should or should not be," Perlman says, speaking like a true club president. "We make up our own rules."

Show details

Everything you need to know to get into the Sons of Anarchy

- **What's it about?** Sons of Anarchy is the story of the Teller-Morrow family of Charming, CA, as well as the other members of Sons of Anarchy Motorcycle Club, Redwood Original Chapter (SAMCRO), their families, various Charming townspeople, and the various rivals and associates who undermine or support SAMCRO's legal and illegal enterprises.
- **Main character** The show centers on protagonist Jackson "Jax" Teller (Charlie Hunnam), the Vice President of the club who begins questioning the club, the morality and himself.
- **How old?** Sons of Anarchy premiered on Sept. 3, 2008 on cable network FX
- **What season is it in now?** Its third season began this week.
- **Popular?** The show's first season averaged 5.4 million viewers weekly making it the network's most successful show since Rescue Me.

▶ Oprah Winfrey.

Kennedy Center honours Oprah

TV host and actress Oprah Winfrey has been chosen as a Kennedy Center honoree right before the start of the 25th and final season of The Oprah Winfrey Show.

Winfrey was one of five honorees revealed yesterday.

The 56-year-old TV host and actress will be honoured at the 33rd annual event in Washington on Dec. 5, along with former Beatles member Paul McCartney; dancer, choreographer and director Bill T. Jones; country singer-songwriter Merle Haggard; and Broadway composer and lyricist Jerry Herman.

"I love surprising people, I don't like being surprised," Winfrey said. "Releasing any kind of control over a show and allowing myself to sit there and be surprised is not going to be easy but I'm willing to do that."

The Kennedy Center Honors recognize performing artists for their contributions to American culture. Winners are selected by the Kennedy Center's Board of Trustees.

In addition to her award-winning TV show, Winfrey earned Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations for her work in the film adaptation of Alice Walker's novel The Color Purple.

Winfrey is used to celebrating others, both on her popular television show and at previous Kennedy Center Honours programs, but she said she's looking forward to being celebrated this time around.

"When I've done them in the past for people, it has always felt a little bit like being bombarded with a love festival that is about you, and you know that's gotta feel good," Winfrey said during a phone interview in between filming for her show. THE ASSOCIATEDPRESS

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Tyson yearns for lost Tupac time

'He had so much love and compassion, and you couldn't even see it under his rage,' Tyson says of Shakur

When Mike Tyson looks back on his friendship with Tupac Shakur, he thinks about the rapper's big heart, explosive anger — and the one regret he has about their relationship.

"He always wanted me to smoke weed with him, and I never did it, and I wish I did," Tyson said in a recent phone interview.

Tyson said he declined because he was a closet smoker and didn't want it to get out that he smoked the drug. Now, when he looks back on the lost opportunity, he says: "That's my biggest regret."

Tyson's friendship with Shakur is the subject of a new documentary, One Night in Vegas: Tyson & Tupac, which airs Tuesday on ESPN.

The 25-year-old rapper was shot after a Tyson fight in Las Vegas on Sept. 7, 1996; he died six days later.

"He didn't last long, but the time he did last, every minute, every tenth of a moment was explosive," Tyson said.

The documentary chronicles their relationship, which Tyson said took hold when he was imprisoned in 1992 for rape.

"Every day, he would call me or get a chance to call me or send a message," said Tyson. "He would get word to me in prison."

By the time Tyson was released in 1995, Shakur would be jailed for sex abuse; he was released on bond later that year. When he got out of prison, Tyson and Shakur's friendship deepened. Both found it difficult to find people who truly cared for them, Tyson said.

"Our problem was we always had to worry about someone betraying us, our closest friends," Tyson said.

Friendship was so important to Shakur that he criticized Tyson when he selected a song from rapper Redman as his intro music at a fight.

"He said, 'Don't you ever play those (expletive) songs again, they don't give a (expletive) about you,'" Tyson recalled. "When he said that, it pierced my soul … I felt like I did something wrong."

After that talk, Tyson decided Shakur's raps would be his intro music for life.

It was partly because Tyson had chosen Shakur's music as his fight music that Shakur went to Tyson's fight in Las Vegas. He made a special rap for Tyson's big night. After the fight, which Tyson won by knockout, Shakur was to join Tyson at a victory party. But he never made it.

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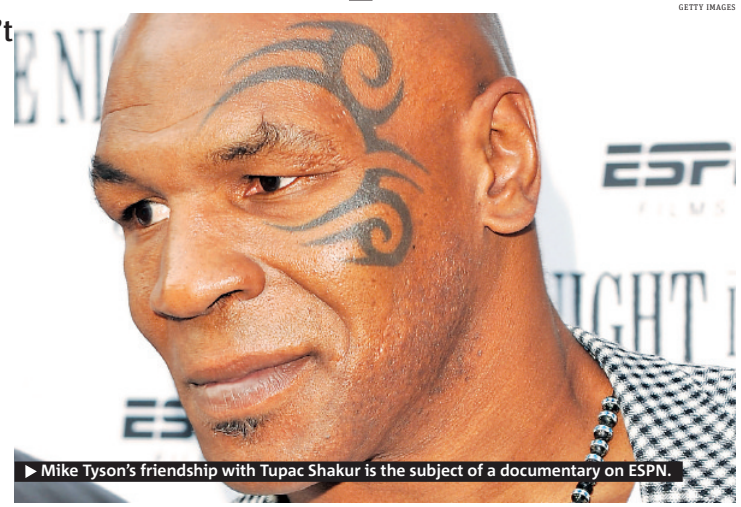
Misunderstood

Tyson, 44, said the world never understood the real Shakur.

▶ "He was probably a misguided warrior. He had a heart as big as this planet," Tyson said.

GETTY IMAGES



▶ Mike Tyson's friendship with Tupac Shakur is the subject of a documentary on ESPN.

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Bure, Courtnall hitting the ice

Hockey stars Patrice Brisebois, Valeri Bure, Russ Courtnall and champion figure skater Ekaterina Gordeeva will be featured on the new season of CBC-TV's Battle of the Blades.

They join previously announced hockey veteran Theo Fleury and returning figure skaters Shae-Lynn Bourne, Isabelle Brasseur and Jamie Sale.

The second season of the campy reality series, in which veteran hockey players are paired with former figure skating champs for dance routines, features international competitors from Russia and the United States.

Other hockey players to compete on the upcoming edition are Kelly Chase, Georges Laraque, P.J. Stock and Todd Warriner.

Rounding out the figure skating contingent is Violetta Afanasieva, Christine Hough-Sweeney, Kyoko Ina and Anabelle Langlois.

The new season of Battle of the Blades premieres Sept. 26 on CBC-TV. The live competition begins the following Sunday, Oct. 3.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Television

The PBS series Independent Lens says actress America Ferrera will host its ninth season of documentary films.

▶ Ferrera follows past Independent Lens presenters including Susan Sarandon, Terrence Howard and Edie Falco.

▶ PBS says Ferrera will make her debut when the award-winning anthology series begins its new season of 27 documentaries on Oct. 19.

▶ Ferrera won an Emmy, a Golden Globe and a Screen Actors Guild Award for her portrayal of Betty Suarez on ABC's Ugly Betty, which wrapped last year after four seasons.

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▶ Michelle Rodriguez stars in Machete.

Machete's Alba and Rodriguez on being beautiful an playing tough women
"I like her scene with the stiletto heel, sticking it in the guys eyeball"

Tough, sexy gals from Hollywood

▶ Jessica Alba in Machete.

Jessica Alba and Michelle Rodriguez have a great deal in common — they are both beautiful women, they are both box office gold and they both demand strong female roles.

Never more so than in new Robert Rodriguez movie Machete.

Rodriguez points to one scene in particular which she says embodies that combination of toughness and sexiness saying: "I like her scene with the stiletto heel, sticking it in the guys eyeball.

"Dude I've been waiting for that moment. I've always wanted a 007-moment like that, where the chick takes off the metal heel and, I don't know, presses a button and it shoots out in between somebody's eyeballs or something, but that's very close."

Toughness, sexiness and not a little sociopathy perhaps. It's a choice to play those kind of roles, Alba points out, adding: "We try not to feed into the typical stereotype of the victim ditsy chick.

"Like, oh my god, you're so hot," — the latter line delivered a comic Californian accent.

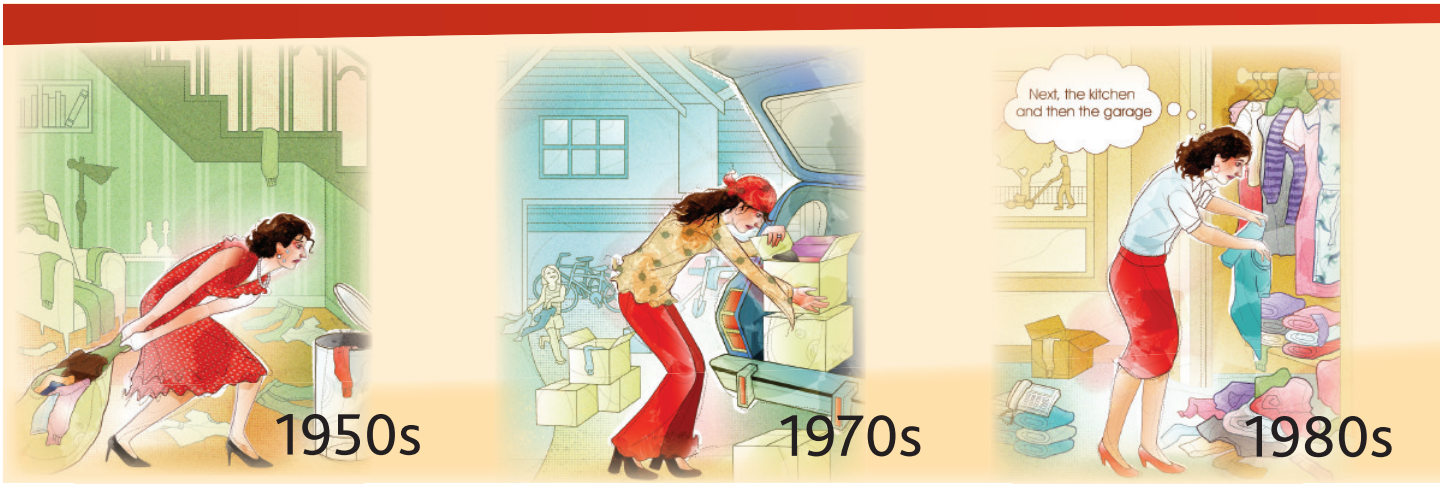
The only downside to demanding these kind of roles is that it can get expensive.

"It means not working", she says "and it also means not getting paid the same. It's a choice." But the choice to work with Robert Rodriguez on Machete and not getting paid a lot was an easy one, because he "gets it" both women confirmed.

Rodriguez adds: "He gets strong women. He understands how to take your attributes and exploit them appropriately. If a girl shows a little sign of intelligence, exploit that."

Rodriguez, with her heart on her sleeve as usual, adds: "I'm tired of the idea that I have to be a representative of some sort to the fashion world"

METRO



Arquette fits in well in Land of the Astronauts

David Arquette took a break from filming the latest instalment of the Scream horror franchise to make a rocket-fast trip to Montreal to plug his new film The Land of the Astronauts.

In Astronauts, Arquette plays Jack MacKenzie, a once-successful composer whose career has hit the skids, requiring him to work as a limo driver to make ends meet.

If that weren't tough enough, he's also battling alcoholism and grappling with the death of his oldest daughter. He befriends an A-list actor who could put his career back on track — but not before the story takes a few surreal twists.

"I just loved the script and the character and the sort of package that came together," Arquette said Friday.

A member of the Arquette acting family that includes sisters Patricia (of TV's Medium) and Rosanna, David Arquette has been a director, producer, screenwriter and wrestler as well as an actor.

He's done a slew of TV and film roles, gaining attention for playing Deputy Dewey Riley in the Scream movies starting in 1997.

He's reprising his role of Riley, starring alongside other Scream alumni including his wife Courtney Cox, of Friends and Cougar Town fame, and Neve Campbell.

JOHN SHEARER/GETTY IMAGES FOR GQ MAGAZINE

"I love independent films. There's a creative energy behind them that's a little scrappier."
DAVID ARQUETTE

"I just hopped here this morning and I hop back there tomorrow," said Arquette, who made his first visit to the Montreal film festival.

He said it's been "really great" being back on the Scream set.

"It's been a lot of fun, working with (director) Wes Craven again — always a dream — and working with my wife and Neve Campbell. There's a lot of crew members on the film as well that have been along for this 16-year-ride so it's quite the experience."

Arquette pointed out it's rare in Hollywood to have the chance to be connected to a project such as the popular horror franchise for so long.

"Through the course of it, I've gotten married and had a child," he said. "It's really had a significant impact on my life."

But is he surprised Scream has lasted so long?

"Yeah, I am," he said with a chuckle. "But I'm glad. It's really been fun. This one, I think, is probably closest to the first."

The Land of Astronauts, which is based on the experiences of a friend of director Carl Colpaert, is a switch from Arquette's other roles, which have included a fair share of goofy characters.

He said the complex role "really interested me as a kind of step back to the beginning of my career when I did a lot more independent film."

Arquette also said he liked the fact that the character was a composer and "that music was a big element in his head and in the film."

It was an aspect Colpaert said Arquette fought to preserve when the filmmakers considered changing the character to a writer.

"Thank God David kept fighting for the composer because at the end of the day it's an audio-visual medium we're in," said Colpaert. "I think the music really pushed it."
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Easy A's Stone set for starring role

SASHA PERL-RAVER
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN LOS ANGELES

Since the mid-1990s, setting classic literature in contemporary high school has produced some hits (Clueless, Ten Things I Hate About You) and some misses (Cruel Intentions, She's the Man). Easy A, a re-mastering of Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19th century tale of adultery and pious prudence, the Scarlet Letter, fits quite nicely with the first group.

Newly minted It Girl (and Lindsay Lohan thunder-stealer) Emma Stone stars as Olive Penderghast, a high schooler who takes a page from her assigned reading material and uses Hawthorne's lessons to grease the school's rumor mill, upping her social and financial standing. Stone says she was attracted by the way the script addressed topics anyone who's been to high school could relate to without pandering.

"The subject of gossip, judging a book by its cover without knowing the full story, extremism, technology and they way information travels, the speed of everything," she explains. "Like when Olive says something and it goes all the way around and gets back to her and it's been 30 seconds. What's messed up is that's actually the way things happen."

The 21-year-old starlet admits taking on her first leading role was more than a little daunting.

"I was a little [anxious] the whole time," Stone says, chuckling. "I didn't know I was such a micro-manager, but I am. I had to be up first and be there last every day. In my spare time, I'd try to sleep, which I wasn't doing too much of. I think it was less about the size of the role and more about wanting to do the character justice. But that pressure didn't come from anyone else, it was all self-inflicted."

The result of all that self-imposed pressure is a performance that has Hollywood searching for labels to define the young star. As far as any similarities to Lindsay Lohan (the red hair, the throaty rasp, the high school movie rocketing her into the stratosphere), Stone refuses to comment, instead offering a wry, knowing grin. She is, however, quick to bat away her newfound title as the Next Big Thing.

"That's nice," Stone shrugs, "but it's such a fleeting label to put on someone. A week later they say 'And this girl is the new It Girl.'

"I just hope I get to keep working steadily because it's been nice to call this my only job. My ultimate goal is to not have to go work somewhere else. I'm so lucky and happy to be here, today. It's amazing now and I'm just trying to appreciate it."

Stone bonds with director

The mere mention of Easy A director Will Gluck's name incites Emma Stone to smack the table and proclaim, "Will, I love him! Don't tell him I ever said that."

According to both the actress and the director, they share a sibling-like bond that allows for unmitigated ribbing and blunt honesty. "He calls me out on everything!" Stone groans, rolling her eyes in mock annoyance. "He doesn't let anything slide. If I'm like, 'Ahhh, that sucked,' he's like, 'That did suck. Go again.' That's what I like! People who are honest with you push you to be better."
SASHA PERL-RIVER

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Writing women off?

Like everyone, we want to talk about Jonathan Franzen's latest novel ‘Chick lit’ author Jennifer Weiner questions all the attention

Chick lit's presence strong on the Web

Maybe chick lit doesn't get the New York Times inches Weiner would like, but it has a loyal following on the Web. Angela Smith, contributing editor to ChickLitClub.com (one of many sites devoted to the genre), tells us what makes the books so appealing to her readers:

"They make you laugh till you cry or bring you to tears just as easily. You can always count on these fabulous women authors to deliver something unique and wonderful."

My TD Points covered my stay at a ski resort (even my ski lessons).

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If Jonathan Franzen had been available for an interview, you'd be reading a feature on his new book, Freedom. But considering President Obama was spotted toting an advance copy and Time magazine dubbed Franzen the Great American Novelist on a cover last month, the guy is busy. We understand, but still feel compelled to talk about his book — something Philly-based author Jennifer Weiner finds curious.

In an interview with the Huffington Post, Weiner — herself a best-selling author of seven novels — admitted (perhaps a little bitterly) that she thinks gender plays a role in media coverage of commercial fiction.

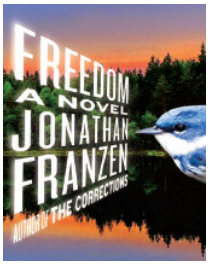
"Do I think I should be getting all of the attention that Jonathan 'Genius' Franzen gets? Nope. Would I like to be taken at least as seriously as a Jonathan Tropper or a Nick Hornby? Absolutely," she said, later adding: "All of them would be considered chick lit writers if they were girls."

While Franzen is definitely having his moment, Kabi Hartman, assistant professor of English at Franklin and Marshall College, isn't convinced there's a bias. "My guess is that Franzen fulfills an archetypal image we still have of the 'Great Writer' — aloof, tousled, tortured — and that archetype remains largely, perhaps essentially, masculine," she says. "However, I take comfort from the fact that 10 of the '20 Under 40' writers named by The New Yorker this summer are women."

Although no one is arguing that The Devil Wears Prada deserves a place on the shelf next to The Corrections, Crystal Patriarche, contributing books editor at SheKnows.com and a publicist for many women novelists, does think chick lit deserves more respect — and a new name. "In many cases, it's an overused term — these authors write books about motherhood and insecurities and families and real issues," she says.

Reading

- **Jonathan Franzen**
- **Freedom A Novel**



▶ It's not all chick lit: Elizabeth Strout nabbed the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction last year with Olive Kitteridge — and nobody called it chick lit.

We paid for our Caribbean cruise with our TD Points (even the excursions).

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Donoghue up for Man Booker

Ontario-based author Emma Donoghue has made the short list for the prestigious Man Booker Prize for fiction.

The Irish-born writer's harrowing new novel Room is one of six contenders announced yesterday for the 50,000-pound $77,000 US prize, which guarantees a glut of media attention and a big boost in sales.

Donoghue's Room, about a boy who's never been outside the room in which he lives with his mother, made the Booker long list before it was even published.

When it finally hit shelves in Britain and Ireland, it was an instant bestseller. Now, various North American publications — including Oprah Winfrey's O magazine — have it on their must-read lists ahead of publication in Canada on Sept. 11 and the U.S. on Sept. 13.

Two-time Booker Prize winner Peter Carey is also a finalist for the prestigious award with his work Parrot and Olivier in America — a U.S. odyssey inspired by philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville.

Carey took home Bookers in 1988 for Oscar and Lucinda and in 2001 for True History of the Kelly Gang. He would be the first writer to win the prize three times, but is considered a long shot.

The early favourite, according to bookmaker William Hill, is British writer Tom McCarthy, whose wildly experimental C — the story of a technology-obsessed 20th-century everyman — has drawn comparisons to James Joyce.

The prize other finalists are In a Strange Room by South Africa's Damon Galgut, a previous Booker finalist; philosophical comedy The Finkler Question by Britain's Howard Jacobson; and Small Island author Andrea Levy's The Long Song, the story of a slave on a 19th-century Jamaican sugar plantation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Emma Donoghue

Angelina Jolie meeting flood victims in Pakistan

- Urges countries to give more aid
- Appealing to citizens to donate

American movie star Angelina Jolie met flood victims in northwestern Pakistan on yesterday and appealed to the international community to provide aid needed to help the country recover from the worst natural disaster in its history.

The flow of aid money has stalled in recent days, and officials expressed hope the two-day visit by Jolie — who serves as a "goodwill ambassador" for the U.N.'s refugee agency — will convince foreign countries and individuals to open their wallets and give once again.

The 35-year-old actress said she met with many people whose lives have been devastated by the floods, including mothers who lost their children and an elderly Pakistani couple who feared they would never be able to rebuild the homes that they've lost.

"I am very moved by them and I hope that I am able to, today and tomorrow, be able to do something to help bring attention to the situation for all of the people in need in Pakistan," Jolie told reporters after visiting a refugee camp in the Jalozai area.

She toured the area wearing a long black robe and a black headscarf adorned with a thin red stripe — the kind of conservative clothing worn by many Muslim women in Pakistan.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Floods

The need-to-know information about the floods in Pakistan

- **Monsoon** The floods began in the northwest at the end of July after extremely heavy monsoon rains and slowly surged south along the Indus River, swallowing up hundreds of villages and towns and killing more than 1,700 people.
- **Affected** Another 17 million have been affected by the floods, and many will need emergency assistance to survive.
- **UN** The United Nations issued an appeal for $460 million in emergency funds on Aug. 11, but only $294 million, or 64 per cent, has been received so far, and donations have more or less dried up in recent days.

MOHAMMAD SAJJAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ the goodwill ambassador of UNHCR, Angelina Jolie visits a camp setup for people displaced by heavy floods, in Mohib Banda near Peshawar, Pakistan yesterday.

Beatles' really big show

A new DVD about the Beatles' initial appearances on The Ed Sullivan Show is like cracking open a time capsule.

Almost as interesting as the band making its musical introduction to America in 1964 is the context in which it is placed. The DVD presents the programs exactly as they appeared that night — complete with hapless magicians or comedians, commercials that would shame Mad Men and illustrations of how the pace of television has changed.

The first night, Feb. 9, 1964, is a landmark in television. An estimated 73 million Americans tuned in, the largest ever for a TV show at the time, or three times the amount of people who watched the latest American Idol finale, according to the Nielsen Co.

A similar DVD was made available in 2003, but without the commercials and with limited distribution. Yesterday's release of The 4 Complete Ed Sullivan Shows Starring the Beatles has some interviews and material that hasn't been seen since the 1960s.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York is up for sale

Selling New York explores multi-million dollar real estate deals in Manhattan

Back in the day on Green Acres, Lisa Douglas used to sing, "I just adore a penthouse view."

She'd really adore Selling New York, the high-end real estate reality show premiering Sept. 8 on HGTV Canada.

How high end? Oliver and Lisa Douglas could not have afforded these castles in the sky. On a recent tour of four Manhattan penthouse properties showcased on the series, none were listed for less than $8.9 million. The priciest and most spectacular — an 8,300 sq. ft., Fifth Avenue penthouse across the street from Central Park and the Metropolitan Museum of Art — was listed at $28.5 million.

While that lavish residence boasts seven bedrooms and nine bathrooms, it doesn't come with parking.

"Many of our clients want their privacy and want no part of this."
MICHELE KLEIER

"If you live here, you don't need a car," says Michele Kleier, matriarch of the Gumley Haft Kleier agency, one of two real estate boutiques showcased on the series.

Kleier and her two daughters, Samantha and Sabrina, are key players in Selling New York.

They often walk their well-heeled clients through properties together, all in their matching red shoes and designer bags. They even finish each other's sentences.

Although discreet about dropping names, the high-end agents have helped A-list clients like Al Pacino, John Travolta and A-Rod find their cozy corners of Manhattan.

Selling lifestyles of the rich and famous to the rich and famous was why Kleier turned down the first few offers to front a real estate reality series.

"First, we never planned to be on TV, second we were nervous," she says from the massive master bedroom of a Park Avenue penthouse.

"Many of our clients want their privacy and want no part of this."

Neither, at first, did the Kleiers. Other networks had pitched similar show ideas, but the family was wary of being depicted as The Real Housewives of the Upper East Side. One producer promised that, as Kleier recalls, "we wouldn't position you as a train wreck, but very often that's how you come off." Thanks, but no thanks, said the Kleiers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HANDOUT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Samantha, Michele and Sabrina Kleier are seen at the door of a Fifth Avenue penthouse in New York City on their show Selling New York.

Need to know

Everything you need to know to get into Selling New York

- **Economy problems** The stubborn downturn in the economy still has Manhattan in its grip, but these agents don't scare easy. Ask them how business is and they'll admit things take a little longer to move these days and a few clients have dropped their prices. But the rich and famous still need places to live.
- **No closure?** At these prices, you won't see a lot of deals close on Selling New York. As the Kleiers note, each season is shot over three months, and it often takes that long to get even Fortune 500 clients to "sign off on the dotted line."
- **Some sales** There are sales in season 1, however, and plenty of drama in trying to get that commission.

We paid for a weekend getaway in Vegas with our TD Points
(even the Grand Canyon helicopter tour).

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Danielle Staub latest to leave Real Housewives

Joins a long list of former stars that have recently gotten the boot

Bravo is cleaning house.

The network announced Monday that Danielle Staub, the fire-starter on The Real Housewives of New Jersey, would not be returning to the show. Throughout the tumultuous second season, Staub enraged Caroline Manzo, her sister-in-law Jacqueline Laurita and family friend Teresa Giudice, though Staub seemed to make amends at the end of Monday's reunion episode.

"The reunion was Danielle's last appearance on The Real Housewives of New Jersey," said Andy Cohen, Bravo's senior vice-president of original programming and development who also hosts The Real Housewives reunion shows. "We thought the hugs were a great way to end two seasons of bitterness between the women."

It's the latest in a series of Real Housewives departures. Sarcastic chef Bethenny Frankel, who starred earlier this year in the spin-off Bethenny Getting Married? told Us Weekly magazine last week that she did not want to return for the New York edition's fourth outing because last season was "scary and painful."

"Do I expect her to be holding an apple at the beginning of the show? Probably not," said Cohen. "I do hope to see her in the Housewives universe in some way."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JEMAL COUNTESS/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Danielle Staub poses for a photo on the red carpet at the premiere of The Sorcerer's Apprentice earlier this summer.

Getting dumped

Some of the other Housewives stars who have been dropped by producers

- **Atlanta** Last month, energetic entrepreneur Lisa Wu Hartwell was also officially revealed to not be among the Atlanta ladies' third season, premiering Oct. 4. Producers said it was because she moved far outside of Atlanta area. NeNe Lekes, Kim Zolciak, Sheree Whitfield and Kandi Burruss will instead be joined by model Cynthia Bailey and lawyer Phaedra Parks.
- **Orange County** Lynne Curtain, the spacey mother of two rowdy teenage daughters introduced at the beginning of Orange County's fourth season, posted on her Facebook profile last month that she would not be returning to the show. Cohen wouldn't comment on the most recent cast changes.
- **An original** Only brash original housewife Vicki Gunvalson remains on the Orange County edition, while the New York, Atlanta and New Jersey chapters have all experienced cast changes.

Vegas police defend Paris' quick release

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Paris Hilton was arrested and charged with one felony count of cocaine possession on Aug. 27.

Las Vegas police are defending Paris Hilton's quick release from jail after her Aug. 27 arrest on suspicion of cocaine possession, saying they wanted to avoid disruptions in the jail's operations.

Hilton was out of the jail in about three hours, roughly half the average time it takes to process people facing the same charge, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

Metropolitan Police Deputy Chief Jim Dixon, who runs the jail, acknowledged Hilton was pushed through the booking process to get her into a separate room and out of the jail as soon as possible.

He noted a crowd of about 100 people gathered outside the Wynn Las Vegas resort to snap photos and shoot video of Hilton while her boyfriend, Cy Waits, was pulled over and arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence.

"Yeah, she was treated differently so I don't have a disruption of my process here at the county jail," Dixon told the Review-Journal. "When you bring somebody in like that, everybody comes over and tries to look at them. I'd have officers attempting to keep inmates away from her. I'd have disruptions."

Because of overcrowding, Hilton presented a major problem for jailers, Dixon added.

Hilton, 29, was charged with one felony count of cocaine possession after authorities say she opened a purse in front of a police lieutenant and a small baggie of cocaine fell out. Hilton claims neither the purse nor the cocaine was hers.

She's scheduled to appear before Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Joe Bonaventure on Oct. 27.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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(even the scuba lessons).

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Aniston seen with TV star

Jennifer Aniston stepped out recently with Cougar Town star Josh Hopkins, sharing a two-hour dinner at popular restaurant Madeo in Beverly Hills, according to People magazine.

"She and Josh sat at a more private table and they seemed to get along great," a source says. "It was obvious that they don't know each other well, but there was a flirty energy between them and Jen looked very happy." METRO

Whoopi wants to be like Mike

Whoopi Goldberg is apparently Michael Jordan's biggest fan.

The View co-host visited the NBA Store in New York recently with some visiting family members and bought herself a life-size photograph of the basketball great for $2,300, sources tell Page Six. METRO

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Oksana Grigorieva wants Mel Gibson to pay out more money in a custody case.

Oksana wants Mel to pay for her PR costs

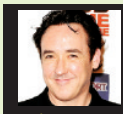
Oksana Grigorieva has some new demands in her ongoing custody battle with Mel Gibson, according to TMZ. The Russian singer is reportedly asking the judge to make Gibson pay her an addition $84,000 to pay off the public relations firm she's been using.

Grigorieva is also reportedly looking to have her monthly stipend increased from $6,000 to $40,000. Sources doubt the judge will award approve any money for the publicist, as it's not for the care of her and Gibson's daughter.

METRO

Celebrity tweets

Jessica Simpson [@JessicaSimpson] This day last year my life changed because I lost my baby Daisy Mae- the best pup of all time...give your dog some extra love today!!



John Cusack [@johncusack] i'm just as hard on democrats too -- FDR was great but dems are as much in the bait and switch game these days as the gop.. i'm sad to say.

Katy Perry [@katyperry] In Italy having an Eat Pray Love moment stuffing my face w/ spaghetti (say w/accent) Loving it, eating it, praying it won't stick.

Cat Deeley [@catdeeley] @jamie_oliver cooked your roast chicken today with creamy cheesy leeks and green beans! Delicious! ven if I do say so myself! METRO

Lilo not forgiving her dad any time soon

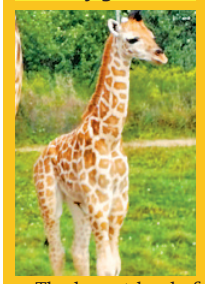
The rift between Lindsay Lohan and her father, Michael Lohan, isn't likely to heal anytime soon, considering what the troubled actress has to say about him.

"He's put myself and my mother and my mom's parents through so much hell. From the death threats to throwing shoes at my grandfather's head and giving him a concussion to threatening to kill my mother in front of my little brother Dakota," Lindsay tells Vanity Fair.

"I grew up really fast just because of the situations I was subjected to because of my father. My mom would try to shield me from that as much as possible, but I chose to get in the middle of my parents my entire life." METRO

3 life

Baby giraffe



The largest herd of Rothschild giraffes in Canada is now a little bigger, with the birth of Johanna at the African Lion Safari. The 300-hectare drive-through park, which also features lions, baboons, zebras, elephants and other animals, says the healthy 1.6-metre-tall giraffe arrived Aug. 18, standing up within minutes of birth.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Renewed Bandelier National Monument tells story of New Mexico's pueblo people

Sure, there are hundred dollar bottles of wine in Napa Valley, but you don't have to crush your budget to have a great time From touring avant-garde art, to gliding up a mountain on a gondola so you can sip champagne at the top, there are plenty of low-cost options

ERIC RISBERG

▶ Heather de Savoye, left, and Amy Hall sample wine following a tour at the Rubicon Estate Winery in Rutherford, Calif.

Napa Valley offers grape fun

No doubt about it, the Napa Valley can be expensive. But there are vine values to be found. Here are five things to do for $25 or less each:

Art au natural The di Rosa art preserve features groundbreaking artworks from the San Francisco Bay area set in 88 hectares of vineyard and gardens at the southern end of the Napa Valley. Created by collectors Rene and Veronica di Rosa, works are housed in their former home as well as the grounds. Your visit can be as simple as a free jaunt through the Gatehouse Gallery, at the entrance, to guided tours of the grounds and the di Rosas' former home.

The Rubicon of Wine Love movies? Love wine? Then a tour of Francis Ford Coppola's Rubicon Estate may be an offer you can't refuse. Founded in 1880, by the 1970s, the winery had fallen on hard times, which is when director Coppola came across it and began a 25-year journey of restoring the chateau and winery.

Old Faithful It's all about water, not wine at the Old Faithful geyser in Calistoga at the top of the valley. This isn't the biggest geyser in the world, but it is regular, spouting off every 40 minutes or so. The water, about 350 degrees, shoots as high as 18 metres. This is one place in Napa where kids are welcome.

Up in the air Take a gondola ride at Sterling Vineyards up a hillside to the beautiful, white-stucco winery. Adult guests are greeted with a glass of wine and then sent on a self-guided tour that offers a glimpse of winemaking operations and barrel storage before emerging on to a sunny rooftop patio with a breathtaking view of the valley. Tastings are set up in five stages.

From the terrace Finish your day by heading south to Domaine Carneros. This is a sparkling property built in the style of a French chateau. It's also one of the few wineries where you can get table service. Sit on the terrace overlooking a rolling green sweep of vineyard and order a glass of bubly and plate of cheese. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

If you go

- **The di Rosa art preserve,** 5200 Sonoma Highway, Napa, Calif., 707-226-5991, dirosaart.org. Open Wed. to Fri., 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours start at $15 US.
- **Rubicon Estate,** at 1991 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford, Calif., 800-782-4266, rubiconestate.com. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Old Faithful geyser,** 1299 Tubbs Lane, Calistoga, Calif., 707-942-6463, oldfaithfulgeyser.com. Adults, US$10, seniors, $7 US, children, 6-12, $3 US, under 6, free.
- **Sterling Vineyards,** 1111 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga, Calif., 800-726-6136, sterlingvineyards.com/home. Tour and tasting starts at $25 US.
- **Domaine Carneros,** 1240 Duhig Rd., Napa, Calif., 800-716-2788, domainecarneros.com. Table service from 10 a.m.to 5:45 p.m.

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STEVE LAMBERT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's all about the birds at marsh

▶ The Oak Hammock Marsh, a restored wetland north of Winnipeg, is home to more than 300 species of birds.

Manitoba wetland provides unparallelled views of 300 species of migrating birds Just outside Winnipeg, also offers a clear gaze of constellations and northern lights

Just north of Winnipeg lies a pristine wetland offering unspoiled views of birds.

Oak Hammock Marsh, established by Ducks Unlimited and the Manitoba government, is made up of 36-square-kilometers of wetland that is home to more than 300 species of birds — everything from finches to eagles to elegant white pelicans — as well as 30-odd types of mammals in including beavers and ground squirrels.

The marsh has a three-storey centre with a grass roof. It's the highest structure within kilometres, so a visit to the observation deck provides a 360-degree view to the horizon.

During the busy fall migration season, which lasts from early September to mid-October, you can watch hundreds of thousands of birds come and go from every direction.

"It's ... almost like a gas station along the highway would be for a car," said Jacques Bourgeois, the facility's event co-ordinator.

Lying along a route used by birds that travel to northern Canada in the summer and as far south as Florida in the winter, the preserve offers a safe place to stop with plenty of food. Birds gorge for two or three weeks, eating what would amount to dozens of pizzas each day for a human and adding 10 per cent to their body weight before continuing on their journey.

Thirty kilometres of walking trails that meander through the marsh are designed to minimize human impact on the environment. And, because it is free of light pollution, the centre provides a clear view of the stars.

Once a month, the centre offers an indoor theatre presentation about the constellations, followed by a look at the real thing from the rooftop. It has also become a hot spot at which to see the northern lights in fall, when the days get noticeably shorter and aurora borealis visibility peaks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If you go

Oak Hammock March, is off highway 67, about 20 minutes from Winnipeg. Admission: $6 for adults, $5 for seniors and $4 for children; oakhammockmarsh.ca.

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*"smallest" defined as the product of Height x Width. *Based on phones available for purchase on the market as of April 28, 2010.

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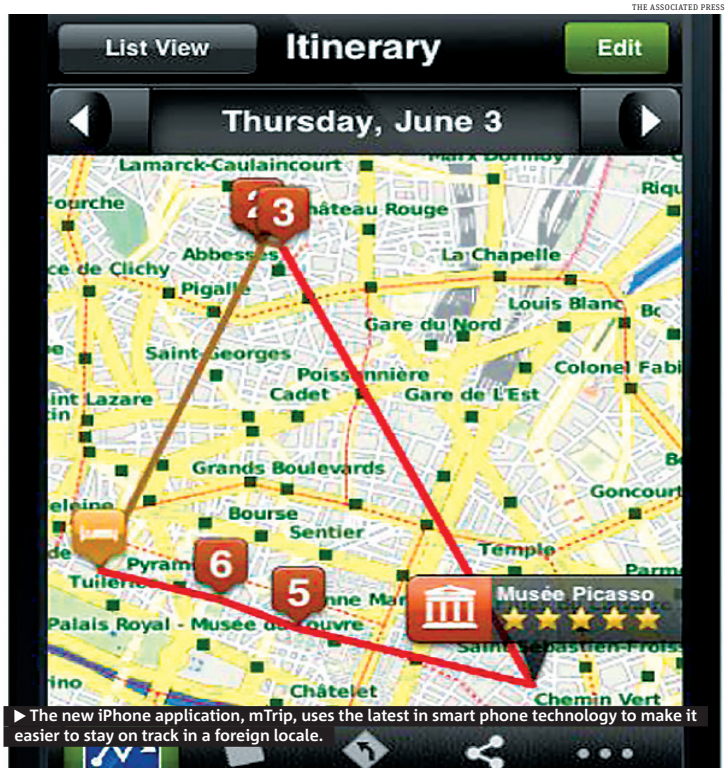
The future of travel

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



▶ The new iPhone application, mTrip, uses the latest in smart phone technology to make it easier to stay on track in a foreign locale.

The new iPhone application mTrip is a travel guide and then some: Using the latest smart phone technology, it helps travellers stay on track while abroad.

But isn't getting lost part of the fun of travelling? So-called "augmented reality" became more widely available about a year ago and takes advantage of a smart phone's GPS and compass features, along with access to high-speed wireless networks, to mash up super-local web content with the world that surrounds you.

It works like this: You turn on the application, hit the augmented reality button and then look through your phone's camera at the Brooklyn Bridge or the Empire State Building. Icons pop up that show you other points of interest, or restaurants within about a kilometre of your location, whether the restaurant is open, and what reviewers are saying about it.

MTrip developers partnered with travel guide company Sparks to provide content but also rely on user-generated reviews and suggestions. There's a spot in the app that allows you to send a new place back to mTrip for reviews and additions to its list.

The app also has something called mTrip genius, which works similarly to the genius feature in iTunes. You note whether you want more or fewer parks, religion or monuments, and it designs an itinerary for you.

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▶ Spaghetti with Butternut Squash, Sage and Pecorino from The Vegetarian Student Cookbook. Ryland Peters & Small; rylandpeters.com.

Vegetarian students now have options

From yummy snacks, food to impress and quick desserts, The Vegetarian Student Cookbook is a must for hungry students short on time and money.

You're finally heading out into the exciting world of student life and the prospect of cooking up a vegetarian storm seems very daunting, but don't panic — check out The Vegetarian Student Cookbook and its more than 120 recipes.

Spaghetti with Butternut Squash, Sage and Pecorino

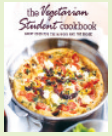
Preparation:

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil and add a pinch of salt. Drop in the pasta and cook according to the instructions on the packet.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan over high heat. Add the squash and cook for 5–6 minutes, turning often, until golden but not breaking up. Add the garlic and sage to the pan and cook for 2–3 minutes. Remove from the heat and leave to sit to allow the flavours to develop.
3. Drain the pasta well and return to the warm pan with the squash mixture.
4. Add the parsley and half of the Pecorino and season well with salt and pepper. Serve with the remaining cheese sprinkled over the top.

FROM THE VEGETARIAN STUDENT COOKBOOK

Ingredients :

- 14 oz. dried spaghetti
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 14 oz. butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into thin wedges
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- freshly chopped parsley
- ½ cup Pecorino, grated or shaved
- 10–12 small fresh sage leaves
- salt and black pepper



Superfood

Fennel

Renowned for its digestive properties, fennel seeds are often chewed after a meal to aid digestion. Fennel is a fantastic source of vitamin C. It's also filled with fibre, an essential requirement for a healthy colon. Fennel is a rich source of potassium, a mineral crucial in the lowering of blood pressure.

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Fiverr makes a quick buck

- Networking site offers services for less than $5
- Great self-promotional tool for entrepreneurs

KEITH CARMAN
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

A website anonymously pairing people looking to have tasks out of their realm completed quickly and inexpensively with those able to offer such resources for the nominal, unwavering fee of five dollars, Fiverr.com is one of the world's fastest-growing serviced-based networking sites.

"Finding outsourced or freelanced minor tasks that are monumental and time consuming for the novice but simple for the experienced. That's what this site is," notes Micha Kaufman, co-founder of Fiverr.com about his creation. "The idea of Fiverr is to capture this notion that everyone is a micro-entrepreneur and can turn a profit from it."

Used by homemakers, students, amateurs and professionals alike, a quick glimpse of Fiverr.com unveils offers of everything from the outlandish (emailing pets/writing gag songs) to practical (designing Flash logos for businesses) in an effort to allow capitalization on one's particular speciality.

Today, thousands of people buy and sell expertise or kitsch through the strictly-online service which allows person-to-person, person-to-business and business-to-business employ by simply placing an order through Fiverr.com. Enrolled participants may purchase from other Fiverrs or post their own offers, with solicitations sent via email. Upon completion of the task, payment is rendered via the entrepreneur's PayPal account with a percentage going to maintain the Fiverr enterprise.

"Fiverr.com is intuitively simple. It takes only seconds for anyone to buy or sell whatever you need for five dollars."
MICHA KAUFMAN

"I draw caricatures of people," notes Vancouver-based political cartoonist J.J. McCullough who uses Fiverr as an addendum to his own filibustercartoons.com site. McCullough's work has quickly made him a popular contributor.

"It's fun to browse, trade and exchange with other Fiverrs as a self-promotional tool; great for offering simplistic, minimalist services."

With its ease-of-use, low financial impact and increased online presence, Fiverr.com required little advertising to gain notoriety. Building a membership base principally via word-of-mouth, Kaufman notes that the site appeals to both dedicated dollar earners and those seeking diversion.

"Because Fiverr.com is available for both financial gain as well as personal fulfillment, fun and social connectivity, its value is broad; far beyond just making a few dollars. Some people have proven their abilities through Fiverr and moved on to great jobs. Others sell their abilities or wares just to do something amusing."

▶ What's Your Five Dollar Dexterity? Find out at Fiverr.com.

Growth spurt

Launched a mere six months ago, Fiverr.com has taken off like something out of the late-'90s dot-com boom.

It is already the 450th most popular website in the U.S. and 800th globally; has just surpassed 100,000 services offered/rendered in that brief time span. Even Micha Kaufman is an enthusiastic customer.

"Apart from the 'eat your own dog food' that most companies should do, I've tried all kinds of things; spent tons of money here in small five dollar doses," he laughs. "Mostly on special gifts for loved ones like special postcards or having a song written and recorded for my wife."

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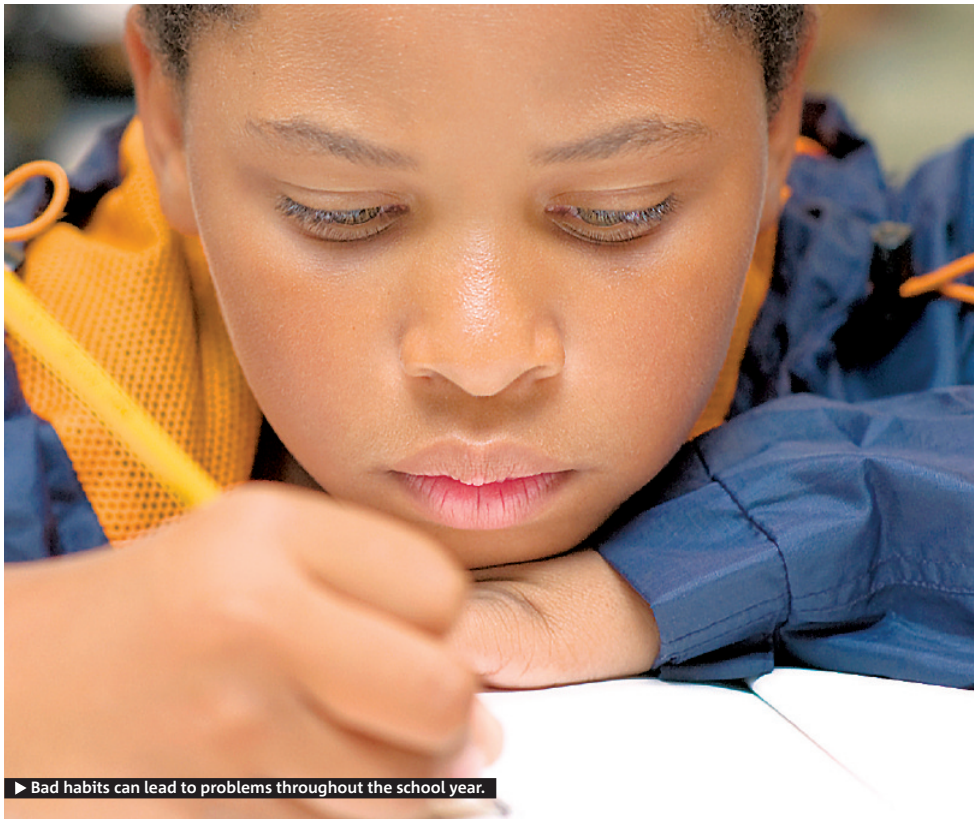

▶ Bad habits can lead to problems throughout the school year.

Kick bad habits to score school success

Implement good routine early or bad habits could sneak back

Now that the school year is underway, students — and parents — are settling back into the school groove. Unfortunately, some students can also find themselves settling back into bad habits from previous years.

"It's important to start the new school year off on the right foot," said Dr. Nick Whitehead, founder and CEO of Oxford Learning. "The habits that students develop in the early weeks can stick with them for the entire year."

According to Dr. Whitehead, the sooner that students make good school habits part of their daily routine, the more likely that they will keep these habits for the entire school year. The trick, he says, is to implement good school habits as soon as possible, or else bad habits can sneak back.

So how do parents and students implement good school habits for the entire school year?

Dr. Whitehead recommends that parents take out last year's final report card and review the teacher's comments.

"If there are school issues from last year that weren't addressed over the summer, it's likely that they will become problems again this year," he says. "Knowing what the challenges are, and getting help with these areas before they become issues, is a great way to avoid repeating bad habits."

Dr. Whitehead also recommends that parents reintroduce school-year routines such as limiting TV and computer time, setting bedtimes and wake up times.

NEWS CANADA

Bad habits

Five habits that ruin a school year:

1. **Oversleeping/Not Getting Enough Sleep.** Students of all ages need sleep. Research has shown that during sleep, the brain files and stores information learned throughout the day. Dr. Nick Whitehead, founder and CEO of Oxford Learning, says that not getting enough sleep can impair a student's ability to focus in class.
2. **Too Much Screen Time.** TVs, computers, and cellphones are distracting to students. Mounting evidence is showing that multitasking is not as good as was once originally thought. Accessing the Internet during homework time doesn't necessarily improve students' ability to work, and it can detract from their ability to focus on a single task for a period of time.
3. **Procrastinating.** From social lives to family responsibilities and extracurricular activities, students can be tempted to leave homework until the last minute. Too many distractions, not following a schedule, or not using an agenda can put homework at the bottom of the priority list. According to oxfordlearning.com, students can avoid last-minute scrambles and late-night cram sessions by making schoolwork a priority.
4. **Poor Nutrition.** Food is fuel—the better the quality, the better the performance. If children eat a sugary breakfast, or skip breakfast altogether, they run the risk of performing poorly in school. Without proper nutrition, students can tire out and lose focus. Students should focus on their teacher, not on their rumbling bellies.
5. **Not Getting Help.** According to Dr. Whitehead, one of the biggest mistakes that students make is waiting too long to seek help. Often it takes a call from the teacher or a failing grade before students seek support. At that point it takes more effort to correct the problem than if a student had asked for help at the "I'm-not-really-understanding-this stage."

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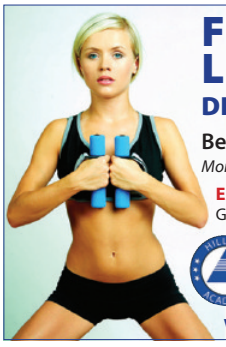
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Know when it's time to move on

How to transfer schools with style and ease

DREW HINSHAW
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

▶ Students transfer between colleges and universities every year for a variety of valid (and not-so-valid) reasons.

Placing yourself in a choice college or university can be a numbers game, and if your grades or tuition veers off, your most frugal and strategic bet might be to transfer.

"A lot of people are going to ... colleges for their first two years," Bound For College Guidebook author Frank Burtnett says.

Plan ahead, and the transfer track can split by half the cost of matriculating through the alma mater of your aspirations. Meanwhile, time may transform you into a more competitive candidate. And while you're there, your choice school might just become as intrigued by you as you are by them.

"There is more interest among schools these days to get more transfer kids," remarks The College Solution author Lynn O'Shaughnessy.

"As a transfer student, the big questions you should be asking are what kind of aid you're going to get and what credits will transfer."
LYNN O'SHAUGHNESSY

A few scattered transfer grants aside, however, that interest hasn't yet manifested into any appreciable increase in financial aid.

"Often the money you get as an incoming junior isn't as good as an incoming freshman," O'Shaughnessy says. "The big questions you should be asking is what kind of aid you're going to get, and what credits will transfer."

Don't let those questions linger unanswered. "If you have schools in mind, you need to call those schools and make sure you take the right subjects," O'Shaughnessy says.

And look for matriculation agreements between your college and universities. "That could mean automatic acceptance," Burtnett says.

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Venus in semis, last U.S. man out

Switzerland's Wawrinka knocks out American Querrey in five sets

Venus Williams is back in a Grand Slam semifinal. The year will end without an American man being able to make the same claim.

Stanislas Wawrinka beat Sam Querrey in five sets yesterday to put two Swiss men in a major quarter-final for the first time in the Open era — and keep the Americans out of that round in the U.S. Open for the second straight year.

After waiting out that nearly four-hour match, Williams defeated French Open champion Francesca Schiavone 7-6 (5), 6-4. It's her first Grand Slam semifinal since last year's Wimbledon.

Wawrinka won 7-6 (9), 6-7 (5), 7-5, 4-6, 6-4 to join a countryman whose presence this deep in a major tournament is just assumed: Roger Federer. Not so for Wawrinka. The 25-year-old had been 0-5 in the round of 16 at Grand Slams.

"Roger, he's always in quarter-finals since many years, so that's not something different," Wawrinka said. "But for me, it's my first time, so it's something important for my career."

The U.S. men, meanwhile, had at least one quarter-finalist at their home major each of the first 41 years of the Open era. That changed in 2009, and now it's happened again. This year goes down as the worst for American men in Grand Slam events. They had only one quarter-finalist at the four major tournaments: Andy Roddick at the Australian Open.

"Yeah, you think about it," Querrey said when asked by a reporter about the U.S. drought. "I definitely wanted to win and keep the American men, keep the hope going."

Williams, seeded third, and the sixth-seeded Schiavone struggled to hold serve: There were nine breaks in 23 games. Williams failed to serve out the match in the second set, then proceeded to break the Italian to clinch the victory.

"It's not easy to play in these conditions," Williams said. "It's hard to know what decisions to make."

Next up for Williams is a semifinal against defending champion Kim Clijsters, who beat Sam Stosur 6-4, 5-7, 6-3.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

41

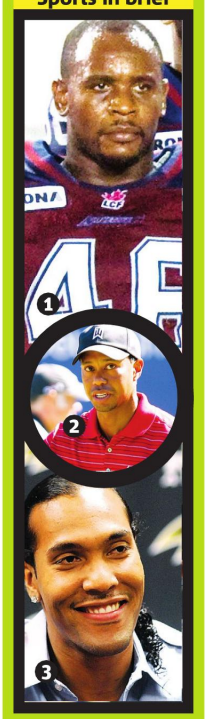
Seed position of Tommy Robredo, the lowest-ranked man left in the draw, before he lost to 12th-seeded Mikhail Youzhny yesterday.

MARK HUMPHREY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Venus Williams reacts during her match yesterday.

4 sports

Sports in brief



1 Montreal's Walter Spencer's condition is improving after a stabbing incident.

2 Tiger Woods is going to the Ryder Cup as a captain's pick.

3 Former all-pro wide receiver T.J. Houshmandzadeh signed with the Baltimore Ravens for one-year and $855,000 US.

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JIL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO CANADA

▶ The 2011 Ford Escape Hybrid.

Escape to a greener driving experience

Hybrid version of Ford's bestselling compact SUV is handsome, practical and fun to drive ◐ Gasoline-electric system one of the best

As fuel prices climb, many people are looking at hybrid-electric vehicles. One of my favourites is Ford's compact SUV, the Escape Hybrid.

Save for its badges and instrument cluster, it doesn't look much different from its conventional Escape siblings. It's what's inside that sets it apart. It uses a 2.5-litre four-cylinder gasoline, along with an electric motor and storage battery. You don't plug it in. Rather, Escape charges its battery while you're driving. Under the right conditions, such as low speeds or when full power isn't needed, it can run on electricity alone.

Available in both front- or all-wheel-drive, the Escape Hybrid starts at $34,899, while my top-of-the-line Limited AWD started at $42,299. That's $2,750 more than a Limited AWD with 3.0-litre V6 gasoline engine, which is one of the drawbacks of hybrids: they cost more, and you'll have to do the math to figure out if you're going to save enough in gasoline to make up the difference.

Escape's hybrid system works really well: it's pretty much seamless between gas and electric, its continuously variable (CVT) automatic transmission has none of the "rubber band" feeling these units can sometimes have, and the 7.5 L/100 km that I averaged in everyday driving was much better than the 11.2 L/100 km that I got in a regular V6 Escape.

The five-passenger seating is roomy, and the upholstery is made of 100 per cent recycled materials. The

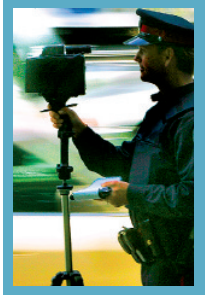
The specs

2011 Ford Escape Hybrid

- **VEHICLE TYPE** Compact SUV Hybrid
- **PRICE** $34,899 - $42,299, as-tested $45,049
- **ENGINE** 2.5-litre four-cylinder with hybrid system
- **FUEL ECONOMY** City 6.6, hwy 7.3, as-tested 7.5
- **WHAT'S BEST** Hybrid system works well, comfortable interior

5 drive

In brief



A Swedish driver could be looking at a speeding fine of 780,000 euros after being caught driving at close to 300 km/h on a motorway in Switzerland. The motorist was doing more than twice the speed limit in his Mercedes Benz SLS.

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Cross over to Murano

Nissan model popular among shopper with an eye for style
Known issues related to accessories

SECOND GEAR

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA

When the Nissan Murano hit the road late in 2002, it offered distinctive styling in what would quickly grow to become a crowded marketplace full of similar crossover SUV models. Designed in California and riding the same platform as the Nissan Altima, Murano quickly became popular with shoppers with an eye for style.

All models got a 3.5 litre, 240-horsepower V6 engine and an available intelligent All Wheel Drive (AWD) system. A Continually Variable Transmission (CVT) was standard, and allowed the engine to operate more economically while enhancing smoothness and efficiency. This type of transmission has no gears to shift, and may feel 'funny' to some drivers until they get used to it.

Look for features like automatic climate control, a sunroof, heated power seats, Bose audio, a keyless ignition system, tinted windows and more. Navigation and a backup camera were available, too.

A full selection of safety gear was also on board, including four-wheel antilock disc brakes and both side and side-curtain airbags.

▶ The Nissan Murano was among the models that started the crossover SUV trend.

The specs

- **MODEL** 2003 to 2007 Nissan Murano
- **VEHICLE TYPE** Crossover SUV
- **APPROXIMATE USED PRICE RANGE** $9,500 to $25,000

What Owners Like

Styling, space, flexibility and on-board storage were rated most highly by owners of the Murano, followed by driving dynamics and ride quality.

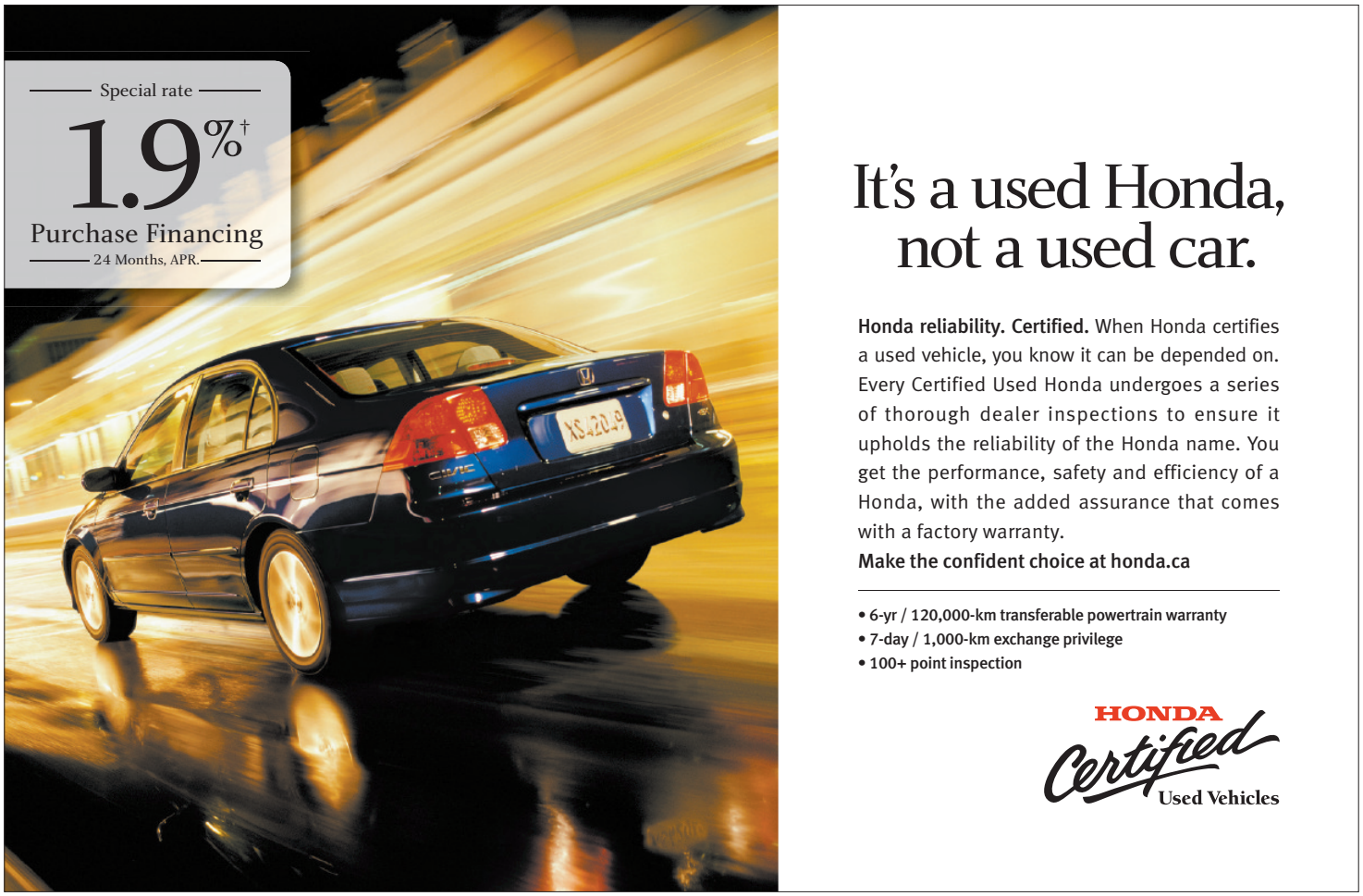
What Owners Hate

As it tends to go with crossover and SUV models, the most common owner-stated complaint deals with fuel mileage. Some owners wish for better fit and finish and a smoother ride on rough surfaces, too.

Common issues

Most of Murano's age-related issues seem to centre around smaller problems related to interior and exterior accessories.

Broken window motors, door handles and power seat motors have all been reported, so be sure to start your test-drive by thoroughly inspecting every electric and mechanical part of the vehicle's cabin.



†Limited time financing offer on all Honda Certified Used Civics available through Honda Financial Services, on approved credit. Offer only available up to 24 months on Honda Certified Used Honda Civic, Accord and CR-V (2005–2009 model years). Finance example based on 2005 Honda Civic model: $10,000 at 1.9% per annum equals $424.96 per month for 24 months. Cost of borrowing is $199.04 for a total obligation of $10,199.04. Taxes, license, insurance, registration and fees are not included. See your Honda dealer for full details. Dealer may sell for less. Offer expires September 30, 2010.

Smart screens are here

▶ TFT screens could soon replace your traditional analogue dials

Display screens in cars are getting bigger and better They are being used in less expensive models

EMMA E. FORREST
TRAVEL@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN LONDON

We're more used to seeing small, brightly-coloured screens in our laptops and cell phones, but now they're coming to our cars too.

At the moment, you're more likely to find the multi-coloured multimedia screens in the central dashboards of premium cars including Audis, BMWs and Mercedes.

These TFT — Thin Film Transistor — screens that show navigation, infotainment, driver-information systems and rear-view-camera displays were once the preserve of premium cars, but they're now becoming more democratic.

As people buy more smaller and more fuel-efficient vehicles, expect to see more of these multi-purpose screens in the dashboards of the Opel Corsas and Ford Fiestas of this world.

Most amazingly of all they are now migrating from the middle of the dashboard to a position in front of the driver, where the instrument cluster that includes speed, tachometer and fuel levels is.

A great example is in the Jaguar XJ where a 30cm, high-definition TFT screen replaces the traditional physical dials with a virtual display. The screen can show speed, revs, and fuel levels, temperature and so on, but is also a display area for the car's multimedia and infotainment systems, driver assistance systems and navigation map. It can even change look and colours according to what mode you're driving in, highlighted with dynamic red when you're in sport mode, for example. This reconfigurability means different information can be displayed at different times, something no analogue display can do.

And in the future? High-resolution colour TFT displays may yet take over the entire instrument cluster and dashboard and become the headline act for all the car's information systems. Large reconfigurable display screens will offer more room and more flexible functionality. The recent Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG E-Cell concept may yet be an accurate indicator of the way this technology will grow.

As the screens get cheaper to produce, they are set to get even larger. In the E-Cell concept almost the entire centre stack was a 25cm touchscreen such that the usual array of HVAC and audio switchgear was consigned to history.

There few challenges to how many ways the screen can be used is safety — obviously it's not a good idea to drive with loads of different pieces of information flashing up on your display.

The other is drivers' behaviour; according to reports most drivers feel more comfortable with old-fashioned 'real' dials and buttons rather than virtual ones. Maybe we're not as comfortable with the future as we think we are.

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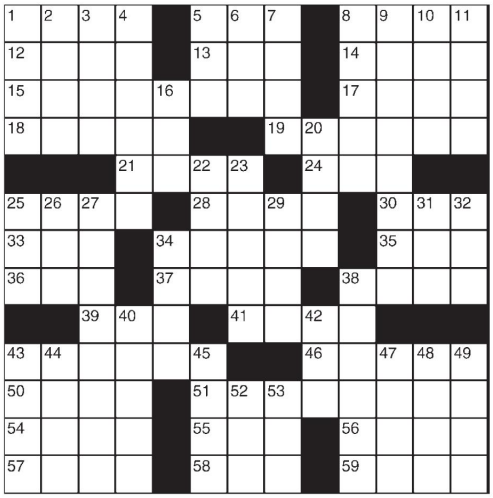
Crossword



Across

1 Hairless
5 Heidi's height
8 Bar room?
12 Pennsylvania port
13 Meadow
14 Colloquial greeting
15 Genius
17 Mid-month date
18 French composer Erik
19 Half a winter pair
21 Charlie Brown's expletive
24 Wire measure
25 Genealogy chart
28 Paper quantity
30 Peculiar
33 — generis
34 "Old MacDonald's Farm" refrain
35 Neither mate
36 Dowel
37 Jack of "Hawaii Five-0"
38 Wan
39 Owns
41 The Red and the Black
43 Missive
46 County of Ireland
50 Medley
51 Giving only two options
54 Artesian well?
55 "Hail!"
56 Ids' counterparts
57 Relaxation
58 Color
59 Jab

Down

1 Honey bunch
2 Carreras solo
3 Dryer buildup
4 Want
5 Hearty quaff
6 Maui memento
7 Brief pain spasm
8 Tex-Mex entree
9 Phantoms
10 Corrosive alkalis
11 Whip
16 Afternoon affair
20 Bullets, e.g.
22 Small combo
23 Prognosticators
25 Recipe meas.
26 Regret
27 The Reagan Era, pretty much
29 Staffer
31 Homer's interjection
32 Parched
34 Other-wise
38 Dormant
40 Expiate
42 Essen expletive
43 Earring locale
44 Director Kazan
45 Peruse
47 Jason's ship
48 Castle
49 Gaelic
52 Wall climber
53 Ball-bearing item

▶ Yesterday's answer

A	G	R	A	■	T	A	R	■	E	P	E	E
R	O	O	F	■	U	R	I	■	X	R	A	Y
C	O	N	F	I	N	E	D	■	H	O	S	E
■	■	■	R	N	A	■	D	R	A	W	E	R
T	O	G	A	S	■	T	A	I	L	■	■	■
A	L	L	Y	■	C	O	N	F	E	T	T	I
L	I	E	■	J	O	Y	C	E	■	W	O	O
C	O	N	F	E	R	E	E	■	E	A	R	N
■	■	■	L	A	R	D	■	A	S	S	E	S
I	N	S	A	N	E	■	A	L	P	■	■	■
T	E	E	N	■	C	O	N	F	R	E	R	E
C	R	A	G	■	T	W	O	■	I	R	I	S
H	O	M	E	■	S	E	N	■	T	A	G	S

Sudoku

		9	6		7	2		
	6		9		1		4	
4								5
		8	4	7	3	5		
		7	2	1	6	4		
9								8
	4		7		8		5	
		2	3		5	9		

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

5	3	1	9	6	2	4	7	8
7	6	8	1	5	4	9	2	3
4	2	9	3	8	7	1	5	6
9	5	2	4	3	6	7	8	1
6	1	7	5	2	8	3	9	4
8	4	3	7	9	1	2	6	5
1	8	4	2	7	5	6	3	9
2	9	5	6	1	3	8	4	7
3	7	6	8	4	9	5	1	2

Send a KISS

Show some love! Send a note to somebody special at kiss@metronews.ca

Aubrey I just wanted to say I love you and let you know how proud I am of you for starting College. Good luck baby I hop you had a great firsr day and remember I will always be right here to help you along the way.
LOVE ANDRE

My Darling Sunshine, I'm so Proud of You n want you to know that you are an Amazing Lady n a True Blessing!! The past 4 months have been awesome with you in my Life!! Lets make it many, many more!
HUGS N KISSES FROM YOUR CHEF XOXO

POLSKI OGORKI!!! here's to you making me smile for the last years. it's been too easy, fun and happy for it to not happen again in the future. lovies and kissies
LOVIES AND KISSIES - YOUR YUCKYSOBA GRRRRL

Today 17°°/13°° Mainly sunny
Thursday 18°/12° Partly cloudy

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Today's horoscope

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20
Today's new moon will help focus your mind on a single objective and before you know it you will be the one who everyone looks up to.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21
What seemed such a difficult problem yesterday will have the simplest of solutions today. The only thing that has actually changed is your perspective, but in a magical way that changes everything.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21
Later this month the Sun will move into the most dynamic area of your chart and your confidence will soar. However, you must deal with a domestic issue that threatens to spiral out of control.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 Not only will today's new moon make you feel more alive but with Venus moving into your fellow Water sign of Scorpio you'll be a real live wire when it comes to love and affection.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 The most important thing now – in fact the only thing you should be thinking about – is getting your financial house in some sort of order. The new moon will help you make the right choices.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 The new moon in your sign makes this one of the best days of the year to launch new projects. Now is the time to do something about all those careful plans you've made.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 You know that your life needs to change but you can't seem to make the final effort. Maybe you're not quite yet ready to give it your best shot.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Venus, planet of emotional and material values, moves into your sign for an extended stay today, and that's good news all round. Love and luck will be closely linked over the next few weeks.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Have you got a new project lined up? Is it the kind of project that could make you rich and famous? If you have, now is the time to get started on it.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20
The new moon in Virgo will do wonders for your confidence and encourage you to make far-reaching changes to your lifestyle. If you get the urge to travel don't fight it.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18
You don't need to fear the future. You don't need to fear anything. Each and every human life unfolds according to a pre-ordained cosmic plan.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20
This is one of the best days of the year for partnerships of all kinds, but especially for affairs of the heart. Let your nearest and dearest know how much you love them.

SALLY BROMPTON

Caption contest

MARK TAYLOR/THE CANADIAN PRESS

WIN!

You write it!

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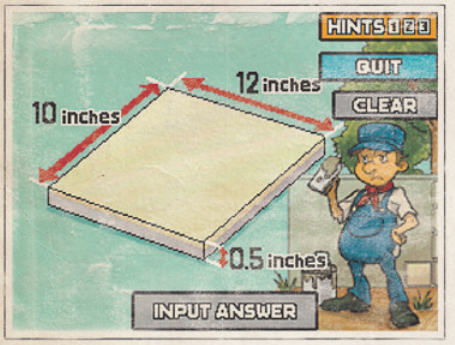

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